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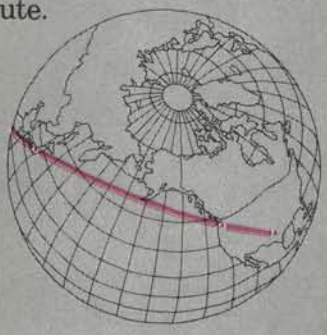

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A Weekly Journal of Opinion

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4 **CORRESPONDENCE** ..... On reporting the war in Lebanon.

6 **TRB FROM WASHINGTON** ... VOICES OF EXPERIENCE
The President hears from his predecessors.

7 **THE EDITORS** ..... BEIRUT CURTAIN CALL
It may be curtains for the PLO militarily and politically, but Arafat takes his bows anyway.
PANIC ON THE RIGHT
The conservatives are making economic alibis.
NOTEBOOK

11 **EDWARD JAY EPSTEIN** ..... RUSSIAN ROCKS RIDDLE
The Soviets were supposed to have run out of diamonds by now. Oddly enough, they haven't.

14 **EZEKIEL EMANUEL** ..... HARPING ON HERPES
It's no fun, but it's not the bubonic plague, either. So what's all the fuss about?

15 **ROBERT A. MANNING** ..... SHANGHAI II
In his first major foreign policy achievement, Reagan makes up with China and arms Taiwan.

18 **TIMOTHY NOAH** ..... ON THE HILL: PAGE SLAVERY
Never mind sex and drugs. The page system is child labor, and those kids should be sent home.

20 **JOSEPH NOCERA** ..... THE BIG BOOK-BANNING BRAWL
In local school districts all across the country, book-banners are on the warpath—and librarians are fighting back. Mostly the librarians are right, but things aren't always as simple as they say.

26 **STANLEY KAUFFMANN** ..... ON FILMS: THREE OF A KIND, ALAS
Three oldies made new but not improved: a kid in the Navy, a hero out West, a schnook in trouble.

27 **BENJAMIN R. BARBER** ..... THE WORLD WE HAVE LOST
After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory
by Alasdair MacIntyre

28 **CZESŁAW MILOSZ** ..... POEM *It Was Winter*

32 **GARRY WILLS** ..... A MORAL REVOLUTIONARY
Let the Trumpet Sound:
The Life of Martin Luther King, Jr.
by Stephen B. Oates

34 **ALISTAIR HORNE** ..... SOLDIERS AND COMMUNARDS
The War Against Paris, 1871 by Robert Tombs

36 **SAMUEL HYNES** ..... "GRIEF, SHEER GRIEF, GRIEF, GRIEF"
A Moving Target by William Golding

38 **JACK BEATTY** ..... FROM HOPE TO DECEMBER
Solidarity: Poland in the Season of its Passion
by Lawrence Weschler

43 **WASHINGTON DIARIST** ..... VOYEURS

COVER Illustration by Ben Sargent for THE NEW REPUBLIC. Article on page 21.

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CORRESPONDENCE

THE PRESS ON LEBANON

To the editors:

I am writing to tell you how pleased I was with your article about Israel and the Lebanon situation ("Lebanon Eyewitness," by Martin Peretz, TNR, August 2). After the first few weeks of being bombarded with sensational, unsubstantiated reports about civilian casualties and other horror stories, I was thoroughly disillusioned with the press, and especially the television media. All I wanted was clear-cut, factual news stories from which I could form my own opinions—all I got was glib phrases and hastily formed accusations. Reporters always seem to jump on the bandwagon when it comes to making rash and simple-minded comparisons with other sad plights in history—like Vietnam or World War II—deliberately ignoring the obvious distinctions. Your article, in contrast, seemed to be based on fact and a deep understanding of the multitude of past and present forces that play a part in any war—especially those of the Middle East.

LISA SOCKETT
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

To the editors:

I am disturbed by a perverted moral logic that seems to arise when attempts are made to justify the Israeli destruction of west Beirut. It is argued by Moshe Arens, Martin Peretz, William Safire, and others that the PLO and not the Israeli Army has the major responsibility for civilian deaths because the PLO has "hijacked" Beirut, and, moreover, the PLO can end the slaughter by leaving. This is an inhuman apologetic! The people who shoot the guns, drop the bombs, and fire the rockets cannot escape moral responsibility for their lethal actions. They know that if they level several square blocks of high-rises they will slaughter hundreds of civilians along with a few PLO fighters. If they nevertheless persevere in their bombardment then *they are responsible.* This is all the more true if the expulsion of the PLO is not essential to the military security of Israel. It seems likely that the purpose of destroying the PLO is not to "bring peace to Galilee," but to assist in the pacification of the West Bank. It is hoped that with the PLO destroyed, the West Bank Palestinians will subside into passivity and despair, and annexationist policies can proceed more smoothly. I don't think this object is worth the slaughter of the inhabitants of Beirut.

THOMAS ROBBINS
Center for the Study
of New Religious Movements
Berkeley, California

To the editors:

Martin Peretz's "Lebanon Eyewitness" clarifies the truth of the war in Lebanon like nothing else I have read to date on the subject. It also helps to redeem from all but total disgrace the journalistic coverage of the war. With this piece, as with others before it, THE NEW REPUBLIC sets a standard that others in the profession would do well to follow.

ALVIN H. ROSENFELD
Indiana University
Bloomington, Indiana

To the editors:

The brutal invasion of Lebanon by Israel has cost that young country its privileged position among the nations of the world. The apparent high standards of justice and morality have been swept aside by an action which shows that Israel has now joined the rest of the modern states in a capacity for bestiality. Your incredibly inept defense of this action has cost you a longtime subscriber.

WILLIAM O. STATLER
Scotia, New York

To the editors:

"Lebanon Eyewitness" showed a great grasp of reality, which I did not see in any other report on the whole crisis in Lebanon. Congratulations.

ABDO SAMIR HAYEK
Cincinnati, Ohio

To the editors:

Martin Peretz is the liar. He was not an eyewitness of a *war.* Rather, he was a tardy "witness" of parts of Lebanon. He mentions not one dead or mutilated body that he saw.

His numbers game with human lives is vomit-invoking. Would the Israelis really be less barbaric because they murdered 7,000 rather than 12,000 civilians? No one gives a doggone about an exact number. The *magnitude* is crystal clear: large!

Further, Mr. Peretz is either stupid or hopelessly ignorant. The idea that *Israeli* censored reports exaggerate and distort Israeli barbarity and callousness is patently absurd. Obviously, such Israeli censored reports grossly understate and distort Israel's destruction of human life and property.

Overall, Mr. Peretz' "eyewitness" account is as unconvincing and farcial as his cataloguing of Jewish journalists and labeling of them as the only "trustworthy" ones in Lebanon.

PAMELA JACKSON
Washington, D.C.

Mr. Peretz replies: Ms. Jackson assumes that the only journalists I cited as reliable are Jews. She is wrong: to my knowledge, only two of the seven are. Her false assumption is revealing. By the way, by far the worst and most tendentiously pro-PLO reporter from Lebanon during the war and long before it is a Jew, The Washington Post's *Jonathan Randal.*

To the editors:

"Lebanon Eyewitness" was very much to the point. I only wish it had also addressed the biased nature of TV and radio reporting in more detail. This has long involved statements about Israel which were half-truths, slanted reports, etc. The remarks of John Chancellor including the reference to "Imperial Israel" are by now only too well known and criticized to require further comment. The ABC documentary "Fortress Israel" and the day-to-day reporting of ABC correspondents are also examples of a trend exhibited by other TV and radio broadcasters as well as news reports and columnists in the written press.

In view of the widespread use of bias in reporting by radio, TV, and the written press not only in relation to Israel but in many areas of politics, I believe there is a need for the organization of a Committee for a Responsible Press. I realize full well the dangers of such a group deteriorating into the position of an implied censor but am proposing something quite different—something along the lines of Amnesty International when at its best. Such a committee composed of highly respected persons, including journalists, could study cases of alleged bias—issuing well-documented reports and providing for both censure (not censorship) and com-

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mendations of individuals, newspapers, radio and TV organizations, and individuals. Just as the Pulitzer Prizes provide some incentive for good reporting, the influence of such a committee—if highly respected—might discourage poor and biased reporting and provide a further incentive for fair and accurate reporting.

JOEL S. WEINBERG
South Harwich, Massachusetts

To the editors:

Martin Peretz's interminable defense of Israel's invasion of Lebanon reminds me of nothing so much as the elaborate numerical exercises of Holocaust "revisionists." Did six million Jews perish, or "only" two million? In the end it doesn't affect the moral equation. Israel, to be sure, isn't committing genocide in Lebanon, but there too the real question isn't whether ten thousand have died or, to take Israel's ludicrously low estimate, "only" six hundred. Rather, we should be asking why any Lebanese, Palestinians, or Israelis had to die at all. The killing need never have happened had Begin, so intent on finding a *casus belli* for his long-planned aggression, not looked only for a military solution to Israel's problems.

JONATHAN MARSHALL
Inquiry Magazine
Washington, D.C.

To the editors:

"Lebanon Eyewitness" was by far the best thing that's been written on the war—and on the press coverage of it. Perhaps that damns it by faint praise. There hasn't been much written about the war that's even respectable.

FRED KAPLAN
The Sun
Baltimore, Maryland

To the editors:

"Lebanon Eyewitness" is a courageous and truthful article. It reflects the true tragic situation existing in Lebanon due to the dual occupation of the country by the Palestinian terrorists and the Syrian Army.

This occupation, which has largely been ignored by the press in this country, caused paralysis of the Lebanese government, rendering it incapable of functioning. This provoked the Israelis to attack in retaliation for the PLO shelling of Israeli towns from Lebanese territory.

continued on page 39

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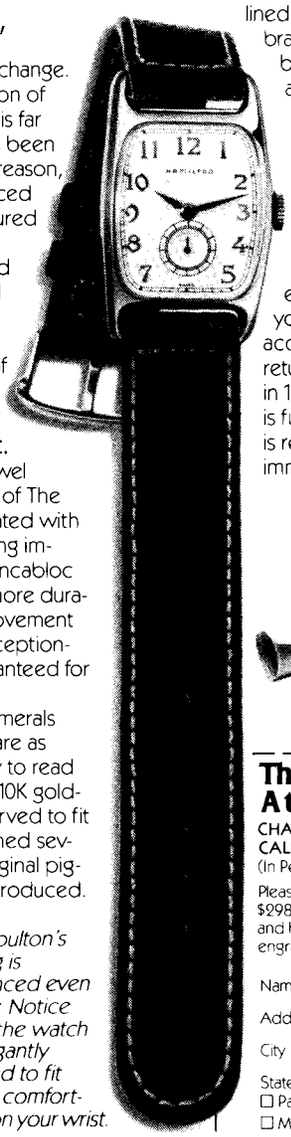

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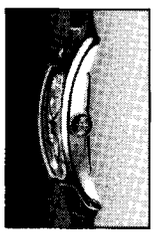

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FROM WASHINGTON

Voices Of Experience

All three members of the exclusive ex-Presidents club—Jimmy Carter, Jerry Ford, and Richard Nixon—have chided Ronald Reagan recently. It fits into the bewilderment of a time in which it has sometimes seemed that the Reagan Administration was flying apart. The Administration chased the will-o'-the-wisp of supply-side economics right up to the abyss of deficit—and then who saved it from disaster? Why, Speaker Tip O'Neill and the Democrats did, to be sure. The venerable Speaker pleaded from the well of the chamber, "I ask you today as the leader of the opposition party, as a leader opposed to the President of the United States in most of his philosophies, the President is right. *We need this tax bill.* I ask for your vote."

Well and good. Reagan won, 226 to 207 (with one unsettled member forgetting to vote), but he won because he had himself changed sides. Now he wanted more taxes, not less. The question is who will save him from his other great mistake. He has gotten himself into an awful mess by trying to forbid our closest allies from helping the Soviets build their 3,600-mile pipeline to deliver Siberian natural gas to Western Europe. Reagan threatens to jail heads of U.S. firms if they sell tools and equipment to European states as they have contracted to do, and the Europeans threaten to jail them if they don't. What next? Everybody hopes for a graceful exit. Where's Tip O'Neill?

Let us consult our three ex-Presidents. First Jerry Ford, talking to ABC's David Brinkley on August 15. Reagan, of course, came to office with a hard line approach to the Russians. He was going to be tougher than Carter or Ford or Nixon. Ford said: "It is interesting, in my opinion, to see President Reagan moving away in a number of instances from the positions that he took in 1980." Brinkley interjected, "The tax increase, for example," and Ford continued: "The President is recognizing that the political power of the United States is more in the center and therefore he has to be less and less dependent on support from the far right." Exactly! And as Ford said wistfully about the pipeline: "The Administration probably could have handled it better if they had been more forthright a year and a half ago in their opposition. . . . The whole darned thing might have been avoided."

The hard-liners didn't avoid the problem, though, and now we're stuck with it. Richard Nixon has been explaining matters in a two-part series in *The New York Times*. He can't help noting, "I have had more extensive personal dealings with the top Soviet leadership than any other American President." I guess he's right; he held three summit meetings with Brezhnev, in 1972, 1973, and 1974. (Reagan hasn't met Brezhnev.) T.R.B. doesn't often quote Nixon with relish. But the ex-President pointed out on August 18 that we have a key common interest with the Russians not to let "our differences . . . lead us into a shooting war." Nixon doesn't address Reagan by name. But he says, "The more we retreat into an angry cold war confrontation, the more we reduce the competition to those levels on which the Soviet Union is strongest. The one thing the Kremlin is good at is wielding raw power."

"Detente" has become a nasty word to the far right, to the old guard, and to the Reagan White House after three Presidents built it up. Horrid thought: has Nixon gone *soft* on Communism? He wants trade with Moscow. He writes, "The more we engage the Soviet Union in an intricate network of commercial relations, the more we increase its stake in peace—and also increase its incentive to maintain good relations with us." Nixon doesn't mention the pipeline issue specifically. But he says, "No matter how great the economic power of the West is, as a weapon it will be useless or worse unless we act together. If we allow the Russians to divide and conquer, they will."

Well, that's two of the living ex-Presidents, the Republicans. We haven't heard much from Carter lately, but that's going to change soon. He's written a book, he's unhappy about Reagan, and he's not restrained by his party affiliation. I have had a soft spot for Carter since the Camp David summit. I think politicians who dismiss him lightly are making a mistake (most ex-Presidents make a comeback, incidentally, after their retirement: Harry Truman is a brilliant example). I suspect Carter will be worth watching in the days ahead.

The thing that gets Carter most sore, it turns out, is not the deficit mess or the pipeline mess, but the environmental giveaways; it is Interior Secretary James Watt. Breaking a self-imposed silence before the Wilderness Society in Atlanta on August 20, Carter gave a searing indictment of the Administration's handling of environmental issues, blaming it first on the truculent Watt and second on the President. Watt, he charged, will go down in history among our Cabinet officers "as one who most seriously betrayed the public trust." He declared that "with his personal antics he has become a caricature of irresponsibility, impervious to any criticism or suggestion."

That sounds more like old times; party leaders used to assail each other. It would be nice to have unity on foreign affairs, perhaps, but it is unlikely unless Reagan can get his hard-liners under control. There really is a basic difference in philosophy, I believe, between the moderates of the old SALT talks—Nixon-Ford-Carter—and the Reagan no-compromise oil-pipeline group.

The Administration's "radical change in environmental policy," Carter declares, has "shocked the nation." Carter isn't going to let Reagan "hide behind a Secretary of the Interior." Some of his own wounds show. "I have served in the Oval Office," he recalls, and when an "unpopular decision" was made, "it was my responsibility." He underlines the point: "I know from experience that the President himself is personally and directly responsible for the policies of his Administration."

These are bewildering days that could grow tumultuous. Reagan has switched signals on the economy, and could do so on foreign affairs as well. His Gallup poll approval rating is below other recent Presidents, including Carter's. T.R.B. doubts that he will try for a second term. And then we must make that final universal disclaimer at the end: he's a nice man. It's his policies we dislike.

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THE NEW REPUBLIC
SEPTEMBER 13, 1982

BEIRUT CURTAIN CALL

Having failed at guerrilla warfare, the PLO has turned to guerrilla theater. Egged on by the camera crews in Beirut—theater, after all, is their business—the PLO now playacts the rituals of victory because it has little else to show for its defeat and its expulsion from Lebanon. In the military arena it has been crushed and will not again be reconstituted as an independent army. In the political arena it has lost its most precious asset: its independence from Arab states and their brutal internecine battles, in which each uses the Palestinians to advance its own interests. Even in the psychological arena (which the press confuses with the political) PLO gains have been minimal. Both the Harris and the ABC-*Washington Post* public opinion polls show almost no change in American support for Israel as a result of the war in Lebanon. There has been some anti-Israel hysteria among opinion leaders, but this will not be the first time that the American people have declined to have their opinions led. There may be a greater change in European public opinion, always less predisposed to sympathize with Israel's security dilemmas, but in the Middle East, Europe counts for little. It might occasionally be called upon to provide a constabulary, but the real decisions are made in Jerusalem, the Arab capitals, and Washington. One of Yasir Arafat's aims in prolonging the siege of Beirut was to win American popular support. But his baby-kissing appearances on nightly television apparently made little impression on an electorate that has seen that ploy before—and doesn't buy it even from politicians who don't swagger around in gun belts.

But these theatrical flourishes have proved irresistible bait for the Western press, which seems to have learned nothing from its tawdry manipulation by Iranian mobs during the hostage crisis. For eight weeks it dutifully recorded Mr. Arafat's daily strolls through the streets of the city he was holding hostage. Now it dutifully records the contrived gaiety of the PLO departure. What makes for shallowness is the absence of context. We are shown pictures of a mother weeping for her son leaving Beirut for another Arab country. Another dispersion, it is called. (Some, like *The Washington Post*, call it an exodus, always careful to use terms which cast the Palestinians as the Jews of the story, just as many journals have chosen their words—the Lebanese "holocaust," Israel's desire for *Lebensraum*, the "extermination" of the PLO—to cast the Israelis as Nazis.) But why are they being dispersed? Palestinians lived in Lebanon for twenty-five years without facing dispersion at the hands of the Israelis or the Lebanese —until the PLO decided to use its camps as bases of operation against the Lebanese central government, against Lebanese Christians, and against Israel. It called for war, it got war, and now it suffers the consequences of losing war. And still, though ringed in Beirut by an Israeli army able to destroy it completely, it is offered safety under conditions far more honorable than the Argentinians received from the British at Port Stanley. The PLO has not been asked to surrender unconditionally, or even to give up its personal arms.

And where now are the pictures of the Lebanese Christian women who demonstrated in east Beirut to celebrate—truly celebrate—the departure of those who had destroyed their lives and killed their loved ones? Where are the pictures of the weeping mothers of the Israeli war dead? And after night upon night of visits to the hospitals in west Beirut, why do we hear almost nothing of the three Arabs killed and forty wounded in the wild gunfiring that accompanied the exit of a first contingent of PLO to Cyprus? Where is the mother of the twelve-year-old girl who died in that riotous piece of theater? Where is the furrowed brow of John Chancellor commenting on the tragedy of

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guerrillas who have become so attached to their weapons that they play them like musical instruments?

While all this was going on relatively unreported, the most democratic parliamentary process in the Arab world succeeded in choosing a new Lebanese president—a president who is pro-Western and pro-American, and who is committed to restoring his country's independence, removing all foreign troops, and concluding peace with his neighbors, including Israel. This event has been greeted here with some dismay. There has been much echoing of the criticism leveled at Mr. Gemayel by the Moslem militas opposed to him. A *Washington Post* headline proclaimed: LEBANESE MOSLEMS SEE BASHIR GEMAYEL AS RUTHLESS ALLY OF ISRAEL. What the *Post* neglected to note is that despite a call by some Moslems for a boycott of the election, Mr. Gemayel received 60 percent of the Shiite vote (Shiites constitute the largest single Moslem group in Lebanon), half the Druse vote, and almost a third of the Sunni vote. (He got a surprisingly modest 75 percent of the Christian vote.)

To be sure, Mr. Gemayel is no paragon of democratic virtue, but Lebanese democracy is no New England town meeting, either. In Lebanon, the usual method for preventing a quorum is to shoot a deputy or to shell the parliament building (both of which happened before this election). And in Lebanon, playing political hardball doesn't mean threatening to withhold campaign contributions from your opponents. It means firebombing their homes, as happened to six deputies after they showed up to vote for Mr. Gemayel. In this context, and after seven years of bloody civil war, the fact that the Lebanese parliament could meet and democratically elect a president at all is, in the words of the Lebanese ambassador to the U.N., a miracle—and a testimony to the resilience of Lebanon's constitutional process. And, as the Lebanese ambassador suggested, it is to be treated with a measure of respect and sympathy.

NOW THAT the Beirut negotiations are over, there are ominous rumblings from Washington that Secretaries Weinberger and Shultz, like all new arrivals on the Middle East scene, are ready for a comprehensive solution. They have begun to float the idea that the U.S. is working on a new plan for the Middle East. It doesn't need one. There already is a plan. The Camp David accords, one of the singular achievements in the history of American diplomacy, reconciled two American friends to peace between them and to a long process of accommodation to resolve the outstanding issue of the Palestinians.

The Administration disagrees with Menachem Begin's hope of annexing the West Bank. So do we. But Camp David says nothing about Israeli annexation. It says only that Israel reserves the right to claim the West Bank, as do the other parties. There is a sizable portion of Israeli opinion, perhaps even a majority, which is ready for territorial compromise in the occupied territories. (That was official Labor policy for ten years after the 1967 war, and it is undoubtedly the position of the vast majority of Israelis would embrace if it were coupled with a sincere offer of peace by the Arabs.) To scrap Camp David because the current Israeli administration has hopes which go beyond Camp David is to scuttle an agreement for which Israel sacrificed the Sinai and greatly risked its security. That is no way to treat agreements between the U.S. and its allies, and no way to treat a country that will never again make concessions for peace if its past concessions are forgotten and if commitments that were made to it are betrayed.

THE ADMINISTRATION also disagrees with Mr. Begin's narrow definition of autonomy. So do we. But it is impossible to ignore the fact that Palestinian maximalism has again resulted in the loss of a historic opportunity. If the Palestinians had accepted autonomy—any autonomy—on the day that the Camp David accords were negotiated, the transitional period would now have only one more year to run. Palestinians and Israelis could now be involved in negotiating a final arrangement for accommodation between them. Autonomy, which was invented to test both Palestinian willingness to coexist with Israel and Israeli willingness gradually to relinquish control over the occupied territories, was never meant as a final step. The Reagan Administration and others keep forgetting this important point. The other point they forget is that Israel cannot be expected to make sweeping concessions to Palestinians who are unwilling even to come to the table and deal with Israel. How can one expect Mr. Begin's autonomy offer to be anything but niggardly when the concessions are being made to a third party, Egypt, which has no power to deliver Palestinian acceptance or adherence to any accord between Israel and Egypt? The Palestinians are complaining that Menachem Begin is not making enough concessions at a table to which they will not even come. Whether it is because of fear, or because of the usual bad advice from their leaders, or because of the desire to settle for nothing less than total victory, Palestinians on the West Bank are enacting the same historical tragedy that has plagued their people for thirty-five years, and that has now resulted in the tragedy of Lebanon: never accept compromise, never accept the beginning of a solution when it is offered.

What the autonomy negotiations need to get off the ground is not U.S. pressure or Egyptian ultimatums. What is needed is some sign that the Jordanians and the West Bank Palestinians, with whom Israel will have to share the land of mandatory Palestine, are willing to talk. Now that the PLO has been dispersed and weakened, they may be emboldened to come forward. Until they are, peace in the Middle East will remain only a phrase on the lips of impatient outsiders.

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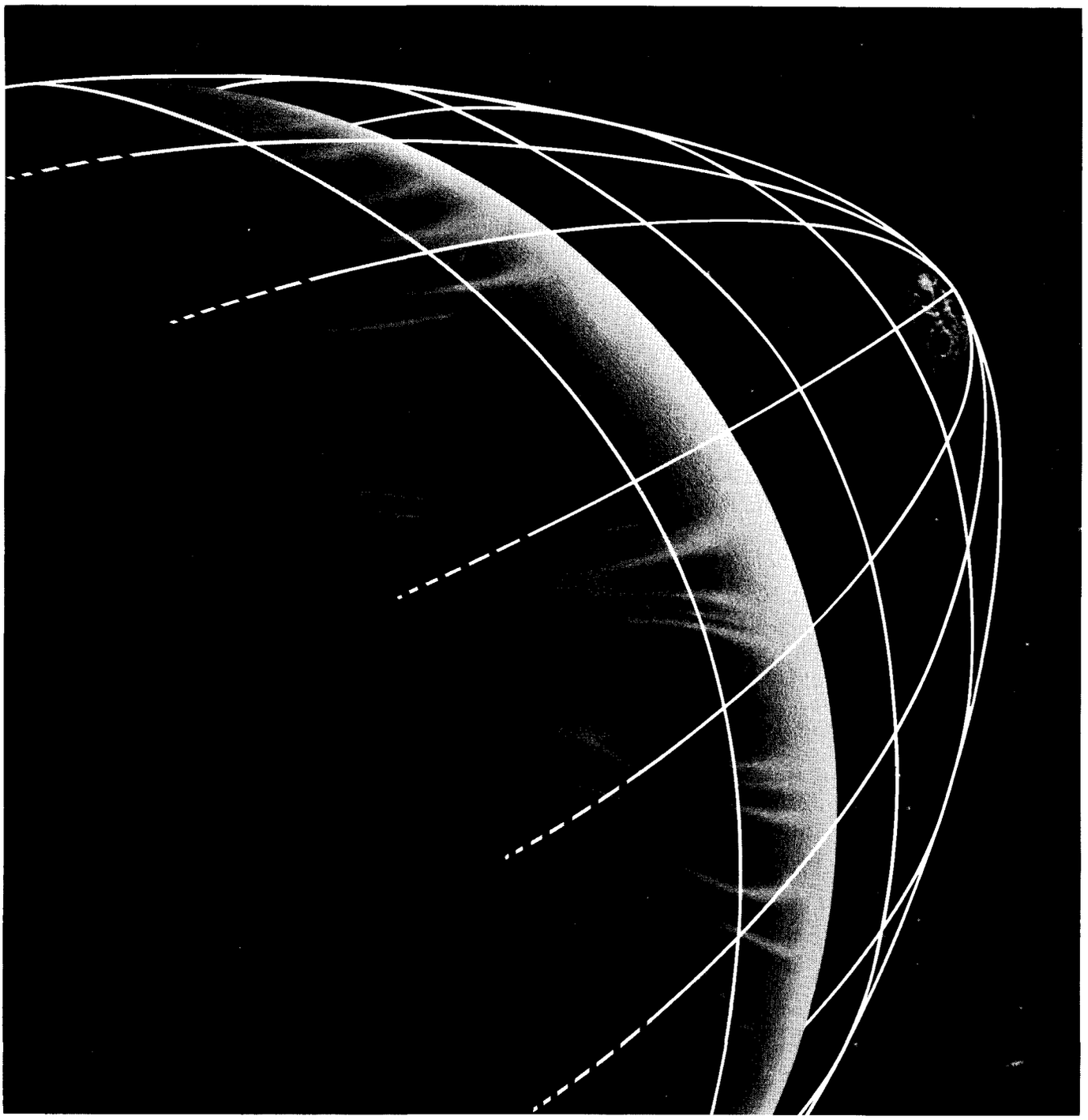

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Panic On The Right

To hear the minions of the new right tell it, you'd think passage of the $98.3-billion tax increase had crippled the Republic and struck a mortal blow to the President's ability to govern. On the contrary, it holds out hope for a strengthened economy and shows that Ronald Reagan can transcend narrow interests. For better or worse, Mr. Reagan has more than two years left to serve, and his recent comportment is encouraging.

The tax bill and the attendant budget reconciliation bill contain some regressive features and many spending cuts that will further hurt the elderly and the least privileged of the country—$12.8 billion in Medicare and $1.9 billion in food stamps, to take two examples. We cannot accept the President as a paladin of equity. But at least he, and the Congressional Republicans who backed him, have implicitly taken responsibility for the state of the economy. His "friends" who opposed him so vehemently this year claimed credit a year ago for the "Reagan Revolution"; now they have divorced themselves from its consequences. We hope the voters will not be fooled. The fact is that the tax bill plugs some egregious loopholes that benefit only the richest. It also repeals some of the business giveaways passed last summer: it lowers the investment tax credit, reduces depreciation deductions, phases out "safe-harbor leasing," and eliminates the accelerated cost recovery system. Far from representing free-market capitalism, these measures distorted capital allocation and improved the chances for profiteering but not productivity. They thus threatened to hinder long-term economic recovery.

Naturally, many legislators scrambled to the defense of their corporate benefactors, sporting Adam Smith neckties, *The Wealth of Nations* tucked under their arms. There is a rich irony when Representative Jack Kemp of New York invokes Keynes ("You don't raise taxes in a recession") or when Republicans rise on the floor of Congress to defend, purportedly, the interests of "the average American." Mr. Reagan didn't let these comments go unremarked, correctly pointing out with a touch of his own unintended irony that the tax bill leaves intact three-quarters of last year's huge tax cuts.

The Administration still refuses to yield on one matter, and its stubbornness may spell the downfall of the President. The $175.2-billion defense authorization bill now wending its way through Congress contains costly expenditures that do not necessarily enhance national security. Despite numerous convincing critiques, the MX missile, the B-1 bomber, and the Pershing II missile—to name three examples—have all but been approved in the rush to funnel money to the Pentagon. Democrats must confront the Reagan Administration on wasteful defense programs before worthy entitlement programs are further gutted.

There should be no mistake: the President, the Republican Party, and, yes, the conservatives who claim to have won the election are the principal architects of our current economic distress. The same legislators who advocate a balanced-budget amendment (but oppose even the mildest tax measure that nudges us toward one), and the same commentators who propose government intervention into the private lives of citizens (while decrying economic intervention for the neediest at every step) have laid bare their true intentions during the tax debate. Some, such as Mr. Kemp, are so blinded by the glare of supply-side dogma that they can in good faith crow about sticking to their principles. For others the only discernible principle is expediency.

Notebook

□ OWNERS OF THE twenty-six National Football League teams, locked in a labor dispute with the players' union which could result in a strike this season, have decided to fine their employees for—of all things—shaking hands. The show of solidarity among the players has occurred prior to the summer's exhibition games, with both teams meeting at mid-field to demonstrate their common determination in collective bargaining. The owners argue that these displays undermine football's competitive integrity. Perhaps so. But it seems peculiarly incongruous coming from the same owners who, led by Commissioner Pete Rozelle, have lobbied in Congress for exemptions from antitrust laws. In addition, the owners share their considerable television revenues equally, severely limiting the financial incentives to field a superior (and well-paid) outfit. This form of cozy collusion makes the players' pressing of the flesh look like kid's stuff.

□ IT MAY BE AS AMERICAN as apple pie to do business over lunch, as lobbyists in favor of retaining tax deductions for three-martini lunches proclaimed recently during negotiations over the tax bill. But, like many of life's pleasurable perks, mixing wheeling and dealing with dining is bad for one's health, according to an article this week in *The Wall Street Journal*. "Medical research supports skipping the working lunch in favor of eating alone," Ross A. Webber reports in the Manager's Journal column, "because debating while eating is one of the most stressful executive activities."

□ FIFTY YEARS AGO IN THE NEW REPUBLIC: "President Hoover has been seeking to cure the depression of late by applying a variant of the James-Lange theory of

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emotions. (The original theory, you will recall, is that you are happy because you laugh and sorry because you cry, not vice versa.) The Administration, thinking in such terms, apparently believes that the country will be well off because securities have been climbing, and seems to have no worries about the fact that recovery would rest on a sounder foundation if security prices had risen because the country was getting better. Economists in the know tipped me off nearly a year ago to keep my eyes open for pre-election 'inflation.' Certainly President Hoover has been leaving no stones unturned to win votes by the stock ticker. His arguments for reelection are being written on the ticker tape. Unquestionably the bull party in Wall Street is favorably impressed with the Hoover program, but it is to be doubted whether its enthusiasm at the ballot box will offset the resentment of ten million or more unemployed." ("Not on the Ticker Tape," by L.M.N., September 14, 1932.)

All that 'ice' may not be Siberian.

Russian Rocks Riddle

London

ONE DAY in the coming month, at a time which is a closely guarded secret, an Aeroflot jet will touch down at Heathrow Airport here with a million diamonds on board. As it arrives, $50 million will be paid into a Soviet bank account.

From the airport, the Soviet diamonds will be whisked into the city of London, to No. 2 Charterhouse Street, the headquarters of De Beers's Diamond Trading Company. There they will be added to the glut of unsalable natural diamonds now swelling the four-story-deep vault. De Beers does not welcome these parcels from Moscow. Yet it has little choice but to accept them. If it pulled out of the deal, the Soviets, who already supply one-quarter of all the world's gem diamonds, might well flood the market.

This monthly transaction is part of a clandestine deal struck between De Beers Consolidated Mines, Ltd., and the Soviet Union some twenty years ago. It is now causing the Western world's diamond cartel increasing anxiety, for there is strong evidence that these gem-quality diamonds are not mined in Siberia, as the Russians claim, but in fact are mass-produced at factories in Moscow and the Ukraine.

The unholy alliance between the Soviet government and the South African mining company proceeds from the strategy for maintaining the price of diamonds which the diamond cartel has followed since its inception in 1890. In practice, De Beers uses part of the profits from its own mines in South Africa and Namibia to buy up preemptively the diamond production of others, and, if necessary, to stockpile the excess production in its London vaults. In this way, it can make sure that the number of diamonds available does not exceed the demand. As long as De Beers owned almost all the large diamond mines, the strategy proved effective.

WHEN THE SOVIETS discovered a Kimberlite diamond "pipe," as diamond lodes are called, at Mirny in Siberia in 1955, it was assumed that production there, as in similar mines around the world, would be high for a few years and then gradually decline. That is why in 1962 De Beers had little hesitation in agreeing to buy virtually all uncut diamonds produced by the Soviet Union—if only to keep them off the world market. And for a short time, production from the Mirny mine was much as De Beers had expected.

But then, just as production from Mirny was expected to level off, an odd thing happened. To the dismay and shock of the diamond cartel, the size of Soviet shipments increased dramatically. Between 1970 and 1975, Soviet diamond production jumped from ten million carats to sixteen million, and De Beers's geologists began to wonder how the Siberian mine could produce five times as many diamonds as comparable mines in South Africa. Moreover, De Beers had assumed, on the basis of Soviet gem exports, that the Russians would have plenty of their own industrial diamonds, since mines normally yield both types. Yet the Soviets were increasing their orders for industrial diamonds from the West.

De Beers's sorters in London also noticed that the "Siberian" diamonds had some extraordinary characteristics. For one thing, they tended to have a greenish tint and sharp angular edges, which differentiated them from most other diamonds in the De Beers vaults. Also, the Soviet diamonds were remarkably uniform both in size and shape. The vast preponderance of them weighed about a quarter of a carat (a carat—a unit of weight derived from the ancient carob seed—is about one-fifth of a gram). While African diamonds came to London in a multitude of shapes—round, square, oblong, flat, triangular, and twisted—the "Siberian" diamonds tended to be mainly octahedrons.

As suspicions grew, De Beers decided to investigate. In 1976 Sir Philip Oppenheimer, managing director of the Diamond Trading Company, and Barry Hawthorne, chief geologist for De Beers in Kimberley, South Africa, asked to visit the Soviet mines. Although permission was granted, their party was delayed at an airport for nearly a day—leaving them less than an hour to inspect the mines. Even so, what they saw convinced them that the Mirny mine was incapable of

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Meeting Japan's Challenge

Ninth in a Series

HAS JAPANESE INNOVATION REPLACED GOOD OLD YANKEE INGENUITY?

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Not yet. But Japan could close the gap if Americans don't try harder.

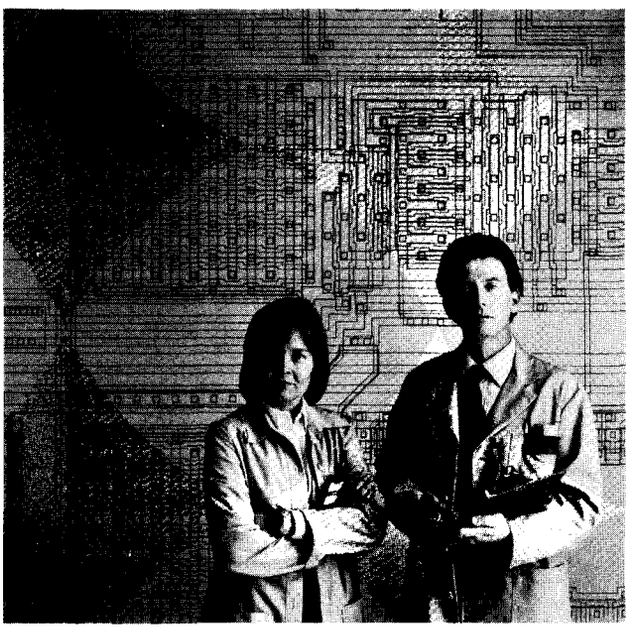
The fact is, the Japanese are graduating more engineers; they're doing more nationally-coordinated and funded engineering; and they're also upgrading their well-known ability to implement the designs of others with a quality accent.

Yet in high technology electronics, Americans are both the creators and leaders. And companies like Motorola intend to keep it that way.

For example, take the microprocessor—a tiny chip of silicon containing all the logic circuits of a computer. First invented by our U.S. competitor, Intel, 4-bit microprocessors are the logic brains for calculators and appliance controls. More complex 8-bit microprocessors are used in applications like electronic games, or to improve fuel economy and reduce pollution in automobiles, to mention a few.

Most of these microprocessors and their computers were created by Americans.

Now the American semiconductor industry has given birth to the 16-bit microprocessor—a whole new generation that's up to ten times more complex and powerful than its predecessors. In fact, a 16-bit microprocessor has the capability of controlling an astounding 128,000,000 pieces of information.



A single engineering drawing for the MC68000 covers an entire wall. Yet the actual microprocessor is only about 1/4 inch square.

These 16-bit microprocessors were developed and introduced by American manufacturers. Motorola's own version—MC68000—is widely acknowledged to have the most versatile computer architectural structure. You'll find it in new kinds of products never before economically practical: machines and instruments that talk, listen and respond; automatic production equipment that manufactures with higher precision and greater productivity; small home computers as powerful as large business computers built only five years ago.

And as innovative as these products are, new generations of microprocessors continue to open the realms of what's possible. For instance, we have announced a 32-bit version of the MC68000 that is the world's first fully upwardly compatible version of an earlier 16-bit sister machine. But that is not the point.

The point is that innovation and imagination in this field, as in others, is American. It is from this solid innovation base that we must meet Japan's challenge. As competition for world markets becomes more intense, it's this good old Yankee ingenuity that will keep us out front.

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producing anywhere near the number of diamonds it was claimed to produce. The hole in the ground was far too small, and the mine lacked the facilities necessary to sort and separate large quantities of diamonds.

Where are the Soviet diamonds coming from? In June, a spokesman for the Institute of High Pressure Physics in Moscow confirmed that Soviet scientists had succeeded in synthesizing gem-quality diamonds weighing up to half a carat out of carbon. The process was developed in the 1960s by Soviet academician Leonid Vereschyagin, who headed a staff of twelve hundred researchers. These man-made gem diamonds were first observed by Western scientists in Moscow in 1966—about the time the Mirny mine and others in Siberia had been expected to start running out.

DE BEERS'S top executives insist that the Soviet shipments are definitely not diamonds from hydraulic presses. They do not deny that the Soviet Union has the technical capacity to manufacture gem diamonds, but they argue that it would not be economically feasible to do so in mass quantitites. To be sure, General Electric, which succeeded in synthesizing high-quality gem diamonds more than twenty years ago, decided against mass production on economic grounds. The Soviet Union, however, may have a more urgent need for foreign exchange than General Electric. And however expensive it may be to synthesize diamonds in hydraulic presses, it may be even more expensive to mine them in the freezing Arctic earth—even with low-cost Siberian labor.

If the "Siberian" diamonds really are being churned out of hydraulic presses, the diamond cartel faces a crisis unprecedented in its history: either it must continue to borrow at least a half-billion dollars a year to stash away these Soviet diamonds (and its credit is not unlimited) or it must allow a virtually unlimited flood of man-made diamonds to swamp a fragile market.

Wherever the flood of Soviet diamonds comes from—whether from Siberian mines or hydraulic presses—it raises serious questions about the future of the diamond cartel. Since De Beers cannot forever absorb such colossal losses in a crashing market, it will probably soon be forced to abandon its strategy of being the buyer of last resort. One possibility is that the Soviet Union would be invited to be a full partner—in return for cutting its production. Another possibility is that the cartel would be abandoned—with all the risks that entails for permanently ending the illusion that "Diamonds Are Forever."

EDWARD JAY EPSTEIN

Edward Jay Epstein is the author of *The Rise and Fall of Diamonds: The Shattering of a Brilliant Illusion* (Simon and Schuster), and is currently completing a book on international deception.

The perfect disease for the 1980s.

HARPING ON HERPES

IF HERPES DID NOT exist, the Moral Majority would have had to invent it. This unpleasant little virus—recently the subject of numerous television shows and radio call-ins, and featured on the cover of *Time* magazine—has become the scourge of the sexual revolution. Devotees of casual sex now eye even the most attractive potential partners with mixed feelings, suspicious of what may lurk beneath the come-hither good looks. The herpes scare has so upset the social scene that some have suggested tattooing sufferers with a large red "H" in the middle of their foreheads.

Once upon a time herpes was known primarily as the group of viruses that erupt variously as chicken pox, shingles, or cold sores. Herpes simplex I infections, usually manifested in cold sores around the mouth, are among the most common; more than 80 percent of all Americans have had them at one time or another. But since the discovery of herpes simplex II in the late 1960s, the American public has come to think of herpes as the sex virus. Herpes simplex II tends to infect the genitals, though it can colonize around the mouth and open skin wounds. About 10 percent of the population —more than 20 million people—are now infected with it, and the incidence of the disease is rising at an alarming 300,000 cases per year. Genital herpes is indeed no fun, but it is not the bubonic plague of sex that some have made it out to be. It is likely to take a far greater toll psychologically than physically, and the herpes hysteria is doing nothing to ease the pain.

According to Dr. Peter Gross, a Washington, D.C., urologist, "the severity of herpes in the average person who is otherwise healthy is not as great as the horrible things you hear about. People infected are not going to go blind, go deaf, die young, etc. For the average person, it is a greater or lesser annoyance." The main physical irritants are burning and itching associated with the blisters, and, depending on the site of infection, burning with urination or defecation. As everyone infected with herpes is acutely aware, all it takes for the disease to infect another person is contact with these sores; occasionally, even contact with a healed sore can transmit the virus. The herpes sores and pain usually disappear within three weeks after the initial infection. But because the virus lives inside cells and can escape detection by the immune system, it never fully disappears from the body. Recurrences are unpredictable; they may crop up six times a year, or never. But according to the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, the "symptoms of recurrent infections are usually milder, lesions are localized, and sores may heal more rapidly than during the

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primary infection," and may even be so mild as to go unnoticed.

It is true that in a few circumstances a herpes simplex II infection can become a serious health problem. If a woman has active herpes in her birth canal during delivery, the baby may contract the virus, which can cause mental retardation and even death. But this is rare, occurring in about 300 to 500 out of 3.6 million births nationwide each year, and it can be avoided without any risk to the mother or child by cesarean section delivery. There are also some clinical studies suggesting that women infected with herpes simplex II have a higher rate of cervical cancer, although medical research has not yet shown any causal connection between the two. The problems and risks of cervical cancer for herpes-infected women, as for healthy women, can be significantly reduced by regular monitoring with Pap smears. The more excitable accounts of herpes claim that it causes blindness, paralysis, encephalitis, and meningitis. Like complications from other viral infections, these are rare developments that occur only if the patient's health is compromised by other severe illnesses. In fact, even though some 20 million Americans have genital herpes, according to Dr. Steve Straus, a virologist specializing in herpes at the Laboratory of Clinical Investigation of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, "If you total up the more serious complications from herpes, there are only a couple of thousand or so cases a year." And some of these complications, most doctors would agree, are avoidable if appropriate medical precautions are taken.

If herpes is not a pressing medical concern but simply an annoyance and an inconvenience to the people who have it, what's all the fuss about? *Time*'s thriller cover story on herpes succeeded in making that issue a fast seller on newsstands, but the editors were astute enough to place the article in the Behavior —not Medicine—section of the magazine. "It is a very important psychological problem," contends Dr. Martin Hirsch of the Massachusetts General Hospital. "Herpes should change someone's sexual habits, making him use a condom and tell his partner. This can change [his] psyche . . . it can have devastating ramifications." As with the stigma afflicting those with syphilis forty years ago, people who have genital herpes are frequently described as "victims" and say that they feel like unclean pariahs. Without a doubt, herpes provokes anxiety. According to Dr. Martin Lerner, Professor of Medicine and Infectious Diseases at Wayne State University, people who are infected often experience a severe crisis of confidence, "doubting their attractiveness, self-worth, or life-styles, and stopping their social interrelationships with others." Others, realizing that recreational sex can result in lifetime scars, have been overcome by guilt for their past behavior. Inevitably, with all this self-flagellation going on, a veritable herpes industry has grown up to care for the traumatized: herpes resource centers, herpes hotlines, herpes therapists, and group sessions with other herpes victims. We already have *The Herpes Book*. Can *The Herpes Diet Book, The Herpes Catalogue, More Joy of Sex with Herpes,* and *Garfield Gets Herpes* be far behind?

This surfeit of mechanisms to overcome the anxiety of herpes reveals a continuing deep immersion in what Christopher Lasch labeled the culture of narcissism. Physical health, psychological well-being, and personal pleasure have become the ends of American life, making doctors, psychologists, and sex counselors the midwives of happiness. We are ridding our bodies of fat by eating health foods and exercising; we are clearing our minds of old social inhibitions by talking to therapists; and we are freeing ourselves of our sexual inhibitions by experiencing sex without ties. Herpes goes to the heart of these obsessions, causing millions of "victims" to dwell on their diseased bodies while they examine their anxious souls. Yet the herpes hysteria, like other faddish health concerns, will soon subside, the confessionals about promiscuous sex will fade away, and the problem of cold sores on the genitals will be left to the medical professionals. And someone at *Time* will have to dream up another topic for next summer's annual sex issue. I'm betting on reversible vasectomies.

EZEKIEL EMANUEL

Behind Reagan's success in the Far East.

SHANGHAI II

ON AUGUST 17, President Reagan signed a communiqué between the United States and the People's Republic of China that represents perhaps the Administration's only tangible foreign policy achievement thus far. The agreement followed ten months of tortuous negotiations over the question of arms sales to Taiwan, and, despite complaints from pro-Taiwan hardliners and conflicting statements from the U.S., China, and Taiwan about the exact meaning of the communiqué, it rescues faltering U.S.-China relations. It may even raise them to a new level of cooperation and understanding.

The issue has rankled since 1972, when President Nixon opened the way for diplomatic relations with China in the Shanghai communiqué, in which disagreements between the two countries over continued arms sales to Taiwan were left unresolved. The new accord, which has been dubbed "Shanghai II," care-

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fully balances U.S. strategic interests in the Far East with its historic commitment to Taiwan.

The document contains a pledge by the U.S. that it "does not seek to carry out a long-term policy of arms sales to Taiwan, that its arms sales to Taiwan will not exceed, either in qualitative or quantitative terms, the level of those supplied in recent years since the establishment of diplomatic relations between the U.S. and China," and that it "intends to reduce gradually its arms sales to Taiwan, leading over a period of time to a final resolution." In return, the Administration won a major concession from the Chinese: a written promise that its "fundamental policy" is "peaceful reunification" with Taiwan. It is perhaps ironic that President Reagan, one of Taiwan's most vigorous supporters, has overseen this historic advance in U.S.-China relations. Nevertheless, the accord hardly amounts to a sellout of Taiwan, or a violation of the Taiwan Relations Act, as its critics charge. In fact, at the same time the Administration released the communiqué, it sent formal notification to Congress of the long-postponed arms package to Taiwan—including sixty F-5E aircraft, worth some $640 million. Not only does Peking have no match for the F-5E, it lacks the military capability and, for now at least, the inclination to run roughshod over Taiwan. Administration officials argue that Taiwan has military strength adequate to assure its defense, and they emphasize that the decision to limit arms sales to Taiwan is linked to China's commitment to peaceful reunification. At most, it could be argued that the communiqué gives Taiwan a subtle push toward Peking's plans for reunification.

THE IMPETUS for the agreement appears to have come from Alexander Haig. Last November, in a confidential memo to Reagan, then-Secretary of State Haig candidly told the President that Reagan's aggressive talk about resuming arms sales to Taiwan was seriously endangering our relations with China. Haig proposed a solution, which, with slight variation, was ultimately adopted. "Our campaign rhetoric and subsequent behavior gave Peking the impression we wanted to reverse normalization and pursue a two-China policy," Haig explained to Reagan. He warned that U.S.-China relations were at a "critical juncture," and unless handled carefully could result in "a setback that could gravely damage our global strategic position." Reagan had just backed off approving the FX fighter to Taiwan in the face of overwhelming evidence presented by the Pentagon, the CIA, and the State Department that, given Peking's limited offensive military capability, Taiwan did not need the sophisticated fighter plane. But Reagan did announce his intention to sell $97 million worth of spare parts, and in December said he had decided to allow Taiwan to continue co-production of F-5Es. The two-China policy threat touched sensitive nationalist nerves in Peking. It must be remembered that Deng Xiaoping's troubled modernization program is closely associated with the ties to the United States he has cultivated. Deng was aware his critics felt that the Middle Kingdom was getting little from the "barbarians" in exchange for a quasi-alliance that enables the U.S. to maintain the upper hand in the great-power triangle of the U.S., the Soviet Union, and China. It became clear that if the Administration did not work out its Taiwan policy with Peking, demonstrating a respect for China's sovereignty, Deng might be forced to downgrade relations and recall its ambassador.

HAIG ARGUED in his memo that the Administration "must recognize that mainland capabilities and intentions do not require a level of arms sales above the final year of the Carter Administration. We can agree to stay within this level so long as Peking pursues a peaceful Taiwan policy." And Haig urged Reagan to "state publicly, without pressuring Taipei, that you view Peking's efforts as a constructive and hopeful sign that the Taiwan issue will ultimately be peacefully resolved." He also argued that the U.S. could not agree to Peking's request for a definite date by which arms sales to Taiwan would cease, but could "develop a formulation linking our future actions to genuine progress on peaceful reunification." In all likelihood, any reunification plan would have to preserve Taiwan's essential autonomy, as hinted at in Peking's new constitution, which will be adopted at the Party Congress on September 1.

In January Reagan sent John Holdridge, Assistant Secretary of State for Asia and the Pacific, to Peking to explain his arms sales decisions and open talks on resolving differences. The talks, carried out by U.S. Ambassador Arthur Hummel, dragged on for months, and at times seemed on the verge of collapse. Things became so delicate that Reagan sent Chinese leaders three letters in April trying to patch things up, and then hastily added China to George Bush's Asia tour. The final language in the accord allows each side to interpret it according to its respective national interests and domestic political situation. This explains the discordant notes heard in Washington, Peking, and Taipei when the communiqué was released.

To be sure, no dramatic shift in U.S.-China relations is likely to occur in the near future. In the past few years, China has returned to its "three worlds" theory, equating the two superpowers in their brutishness and increasingly criticizing U.S. policy toward the third world. Moreover, the low priority given the military in China's modernization program suggests that despite U.S. willingness to sell military hardware, no significant Chinese purchase of U.S. arms will occur in the near future. But the agreement advances Sino-American relations, defuses the Taiwan issue for the foreseeable future, and perhaps curbs any Chinese temptation to respond with much enthusiasm to Soviet overtures, which have grown more heated

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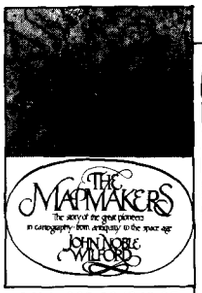

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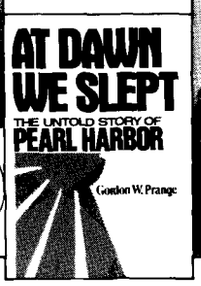

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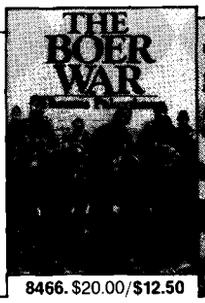

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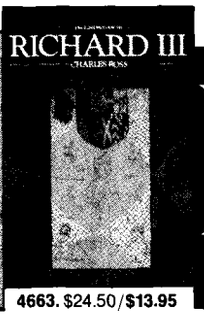

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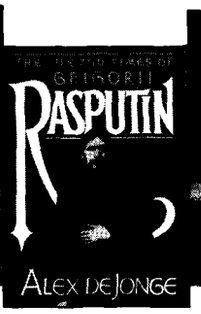

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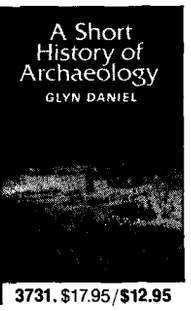

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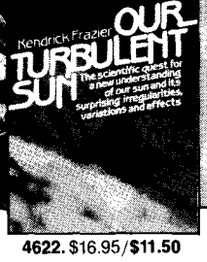
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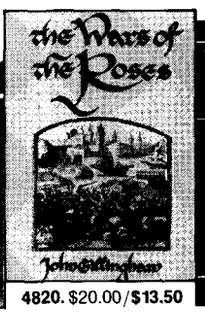

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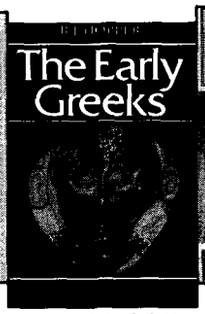

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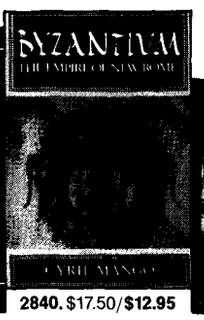

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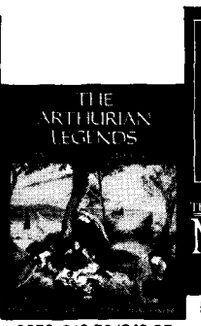

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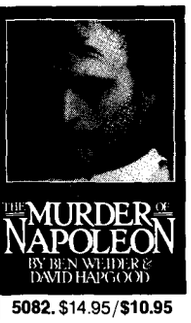

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in recent months as tensions between the U.S. and China mounted. The Administration ultimately made a decision that China's value as a strategic asset outweighed its ideological commitment to Taiwan. There is a lesson for President Reagan in the Administration's new understanding with China, for it is a victory of pragmatism and patient diplomacy over rhetorical bluster.

ROBERT A. MANNING

Robert A. Manning is a Washington correspondent for the Hong Kong-based *Far Eastern Economic Review.*

ON THE HILL

PAGE SLAVERY

WHEN THE Labor Department recently tried to loosen up child labor regulations in order to permit fourteen- and fifteen-year-olds to work longer hours, the sound and fury from Capitol Hill was deafening. Senator Edward Kennedy cited the change as yet another indication that the department had, under Reagan, "virtually abandoned its role as the advocate for the unorganized and unemployed." Representative George Miller, Democrat of California, denounced the proposed rules as "Faginomics." The Administration has now been forced to retreat on the matter, extending the period of review for the regulations until a watered-down substitute can be produced. It is reassuring to know that our elected representatives possess the moral fiber required to resist such Dickensian manifestations of supply-side economics. I'm sure their teenage pages would agree.

Congressional pages have been in the news a lot lately, mostly because one of them, a former page from Arkansas named Leroy Williams Jr., claimed to have been seduced by three homosexual Congressmen, and to have arranged a meeting between a Senator and a prostitute. (There are also rumors of a cocaine ring.) Williams's credibility suffered after the page scandal ("tailgate," as it is playfully referred to on the Hill) broke early in July. First, Williams flunked a lie detector test. Then he confessed to *The Washington Post* that he had invented some of the details of his story. These setbacks didn't deter the Justice Department and the House ethics committee from launching major investigations of the charges. The Justice Department finally gave up last month, but the House's efforts chug along under their own steam. Even Joseph Califano, Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare under Jimmy Carter, has gotten into the act, accepting the solemn duty of special counsel to the House ethics committee "with the greatest reluctance." (Califano's sacrifice will cost taxpayers a hefty $100 an hour for the services of his law firm, Califano, Ross and Heineman, rates that Califano boasts are "far below" the firm's usual partner fees.)

There may or may not be something to these charges of sexual abuse and drug smuggling. But it will be disappointing if all that comes of this particular scandal is two or three ruined political careers. A larger question has been raised by the page scandal, one that is only dimly perceived on the Hill: what are these children doing here in the first place?

The short answer seems to be that they've been here for a very long time. The earliest available records show that three House pages served in the Twentieth Congress, which sat between 1827 and 1829. Congressional legend has it that the first Senate page was an extremely well-connected nine-year-old boy named Grafton Dulany Hanson. Hanson was sponsored by both Daniel Webster and Henry Clay, a rare honor indeed, and one that probably had something to do with the fact that young Grafton was a direct descendant of John Hanson, president of the Continental Congress. Grafton served as a Senate page until he was nineteen, by which time he had presumably tired of filling ink boxes and sand shakers (for blotting), lighting lamps and wood stoves, and trotting on horseback between the Senate chamber and the various executive departments. What challenge did this privileged lad then take on? Senator? Inventor? Poet? Plantation owner? Wrong on all counts. Grafton settled into a comfortable job as postmaster of the Senate. The career of Isaac Bassett, the second Senate page, also appointed by Daniel Webster, followed an even less inspiring pattern. Isaac came on board a few years after Grafton, and hung around in various capacities for the rest of his productive life—sixty-four years in all.

When a boy or girl between the ages of fourteen and eighteen is selected to be a Capitol Hill page through the sponsorship of a particular member of Congress, he or she is taken out of school, where the sponsor has presumably observed some demonstration of leadership ability, and dropped for anywhere from a few weeks to a few years into the House, the Senate, or the Supreme Court, where he or she is given the status of a servant. This may provide a valuable lesson in humility for some pages. But more likely, it swells their heads. The pages, after all, are not going to write on their college applications, "Was servant, learned lesson in humility." They will write, "Was one of one hundred teenagers nationwide selected to be a Capitol Hill page." It hardly matters that this process of selection is rarely based strictly on merit, instead generally favoring the children of big contributors. Indeed, the obvious role of patronage in the system may have a slightly beneficial effect on the pages, endowing them

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with some private shame and a sense of the role of luck in achieving success. (Or it may make them so cynical that they cease to care about doing well at all.) Whether the process of selection is meritocratic or pure patronage, however, the result is the same: children are made to do menial tasks for the sake of some dimly imagined educational benefit.

Representative Bill Emerson, Republican of Missouri, described this benefit as best he could when he appeared before a panel appointed last July by Speaker O'Neill to look into the page system. Emerson, a former page himself, recalled his period of servitude as "perhaps the very best educational experience that I have ever had. It was an absorptive experience. You learn by doing. You learn the process of government. You sit up there on the floor in the midst of your duties listening to the debate. You just learn a lot." But then, as if to concede that the *doing* part of the job wasn't the nub, Emerson added, "It helps, of course, to become acquainted with the personalities that make this institution work." Quite so. The real lure of the job is not the opportunity to run errands, but rather to make the acquaintance of Senators and Representatives. Sycophancy may be an inevitable vice among the ambitious, even at the age of fourteen. But do we really need to institutionalize it?

THIS IS NOT TO SAY that there isn't some value to the sort of hanging around that is part of any apprenticeship. A lot can be learned through osmosis. But the page system differs from other apprenticeships in one crucial respect: no matter how well you do your job, if you want to practice the trade you must answer not to the House or Senate chambers but to the voters of a particular district or state. A clever apprentice carpenter will soon become a journeyman carpenter. But a clever page can only aspire to climb the page hierarchy—which makes *Tom Brown's Schooldays* read like *Summerhill*—from "runner" to floor page to cloakroom page to overseer to Speaker's page. You might argue that intimate familiarity with the parliamentary process provides some former pages with an advantage when they finally are old enough to run for office. But you can also argue, more persuasively, that intimate familiarity with one's home district provides the crucial advantage. Even licking stamps for a local candidate constitutes a more significant political education than fetching a glass of water for Barry Goldwater.

If the page system were nothing more than a modest failure at passing along a meaningful political experience to the young—like Boy's State, for instance—it would probably be nothing to fuss about. But the page system is more than an idle extracurricular activity; it is a full-time job. Pages are expected to be at work by 10:30 a.m., and to remain until the day's session is adjourned, generally around 6:30 p.m. This leaves only a limited amount of time for school. "We don't get as much homework as we do at home," explains one pupil at the Capitol Page School, located above the Library of Congress. We'll call him Buttons. (I promised anonymity to the pages I interviewed, on the assumption that no one under the age of eighteen should be responsible for anything he or she says to a reporter.) Does this slacking off have a detrimental effect on the pages' intellectual development? Buttons answered with the unmistakable self-assurance of an adolescent with long experience in ducking responsibility: "All of us are pretty mature. We can handle things like that." The busy pace of his schedule means Buttons spends only an hour or two each day on his homework. Work habits like these tend to reinforce the arrogance of these privileged teenagers: I'm smart, I'm well connected, so why should I be a grind?

MOST PAGES have few kind words for the Capitol Page School, which meets every morning from 6:10 till 10:30. The school is run by the D.C. system, and teaches more or less the same subjects that the others do—English, American history, trigonometry, biology, French, and so on—plus a few more unusual offerings, such as Social Issues and Ecology, and Business Law. (A fully equipped chemistry lab, however, is forbidden on the grounds that it might endanger the precious inventory below in the Library of Congress.) If students were required to spend more than four hours a day at the Page School, it would probably be as good as any other in Washington. Unfortunately, page duties preclude that possibility. Students are expected to maintain a C average or better, but one former student told the House Elementary, Secondary and Vocational Education Subcommittee in 1976 that many students who "had a C average or below . . . weren't sent home." A questionnaire sent to the House pages that year found that nearly all respondents thought the Page School compared unfavorably with their previous schools. And when the manager of one of the apartment houses where the pages live—there is no official dormitory—was asked to testify in the 1976 hearings about the pages' study habits, she told the subcommittee, "Frankly, until my conversation with the person who invited me here, I didn't know they were supposed to study." Indeed, she couldn't "remember ever seeing any of them carrying a book."

Some of the disciplinary problems might be solved with the construction of the proposed John W. McCormack Residential Page School, which would house all the pages under one roof for the first time, but would, alas, cost somewhere around $10 million, according to the estimate of William Ensign, assistant architect of the Capitol. A somewhat less expensive project recommended by the Speaker's Commission, which wants to maintain the page system as a one-semester program for high school juniors, involves the renovation of a House office building annex for residential use. Even if construction could be done cheaply, however, a page dormitory would create its own problems. As one

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Congressional aide pointed out to me, the last thing most Representatives and Senators want is to be in a position where they routinely catch pages indulging in the sort of boarding school misbehavior—drinking, smoking dope, or whatever—that would require embarrassing phone calls to important constituents.

It would be far simpler to send these children home. True, this would deny a rare privilege to those lucky few who get a chance to see government in action. But if a teenager really wants to work on Capitol Hill, why not wait until a summer off from college, when a far greater number of jobs that offer more meaningful experience can be acquired through internships? While the Capitol pages enjoy the not inconsiderable salary of $8,000 a year, unemployment for grown-ups climbs toward 10 percent. The less particular among these unemployed—surely there are a hundred of them in Washington—would welcome the opportunity to enjoy the small pleasures of a patronage job. Meanwhile, the teenagers who serve in that job ought to go home, where they can pass student council resolutions to their hearts' content.

TIMOTHY NOAH

School libraries are getting to be astonishingly noisy places.

THE BIG BOOK-BANNING BRAWL

BY JOSEPH NOCERA

LIBRARIANS are generally thought to be timid souls. A library is a sleepy, musty sort of place where people talk in whispers if they talk at all; a librarian is a tremulous, myopic, inoffending sort of person, whose credo is SILENCE, PLEASE. And if librarians love books better than they love people—well, so much the better for people who love books. Librarians, that is to say, are not crusaders. So it comes as a rather pleasant surprise to find that under the mousy exterior of many a librarian beats the fierce heart of a knight of liberty battling the dragons of censorship.

It is easy to miss the crusading spirit of the librarian because it tends to stay submerged unless the dragons are breathing fire. But lately there has been a good deal of fire-breathing, and the flames are licking at what librarians love best: their books. The most notorious recent example, of course, was the farcical attempt last April by a Fairfax County, Virginia, school official to ban *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* from the curriculum of none other than the Mark Twain Intermediate School. (That delicious irony propelled the case onto the nation's front pages.) There have been other well-publicized incidents: for example, the one in Texas not too long ago, where the State Board of Education chose not to buy the *American Heritage Dictionary* for school library use because of the number of "dirty" words it contained. Or an Abingdon, Virginia, case, highlighted late last year by "60 Minutes," where a minister tried to purge the shelves of the local public library of such works as Harold Robbins's *The Lonely Lady* and Philip Roth's *Goodbye Columbus* on the grounds that they are "pornographic." Or, most significantly, the case of *Board of Education, Island Trees Free School District* v. *Pico*, in which five high school students in a Long Island community sued the school board after the board removed nine books from the school library. *Pico* was argued in March before the Supreme Court, which ruled on June 25 that school officials can be taken to federal court if they are challenged about removing books from school libraries.

The *Pico* case is one of those classic First Amendment fights in which the First is matched up against some other impressive-sounding right (in this case, the right of a community to decide which books its school library should contain). Over the last decade, there have been about a dozen Court of Appeals decisions concerning school libraries, but those decisions have been so varied that the case law is murky. On the same day the Second Court of Appeals decided *Pico* in favor of the students, to cite the most extreme example of the legal confusion, it also decided another, nearly identical case in favor of a school board. The Supreme Court decision on *Pico* does little to clear up the confusion. The vote was almost evenly split, with four Justices declaring that book banning infringes on students' First Amendment rights, four that it does not, and one that the decision should be made in a lower court.

Librarians say that these well-known cases are but the tip of the iceberg, and they are right. Judith Krug, the head of the Office of Intellectual Freedom of the American Library Association—and the person who probably keeps the closest watch of anyone in the

Joseph Nocera is an associate editor of *Texas Monthly*.

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His writings have been used in numerous style and content workshops and accredited courses at such institutions as California State University, UCLA, Fordham, University of Illinois and Worcester Polytechnic Institute.

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country on book-banning attempts—says that her office used to hear of roughly one hundred incidents a year in the early 1970s. By the late 1970s, that number was up to about three hundred a year; and by 1981 the figure had reached one thousand. Krug, and librarians in general, tend to blame the post-1980 upsurge in book banning on the election of Ronald Reagan, an event they believe emboldened the Moral Majority and others on the right (where the overwhelming bulk of book-banning efforts originate). The true number of book-banning incidents is probably a good deal higher, since there are doubtless hundreds of cases that are haggled over quietly, away from the glare of publicity, and unknown to Judith Krug and the library association. So if censorship is one of those issues that has ebbed and flowed throughout the course of American history, then it's fair to say that at the moment it is in flood tide.

WHAT IS considerably less clear than the numbers of book-banning attempts is what should be done about them. To librarians, whose reactions are important because they are on the front lines of most book-banning battles, the answer is simple: fight. As a general rule (though this is admittedly a very broad generalization), librarians are First Amendment absolutists, with attitudes strikingly similar to those held by many journalists. *Any* attempt to strike *any* book under *any* circumstance from *any* library is seen as a pernicious act, reeking of unconstitutionality. On a more pedestrian level, it is also seen as a slap at the librarian's judgment. Choosing books for libraries is what librarians are trained to do, and they tend to view anyone who questions the decision to place a particular book on a library shelf—no matter how "well-intentioned" that person might be—as a potential enemy who must be bludgeoned into submission with a First Amendment tire-iron. "There is no higher good than the First Amendment," says Krug.

Certainly there are plenty of times when that attitude is not only appropriate but right. If book banners were able to strip libraries and bookstores of books they didn't like—for whatever reason, be it politics, morals, or sloppy grammar—then the First Amendment wouldn't be worth very much. But when you look a little closer at the current book-banning furor, you find that the incidents are just not that cut-and-dried. There are many cases that seem not so much fights over the First Amendment as conflicts over differing values, or differing perceptions of what is appropriate for children to see and read and learn. And in these latter cases, it seems to me, a hard-line First Amendment position is usually out of place. It polarizes unnecessarily; it fails to make important distinctions between truly critical battles and trivial ones; it causes people to refuse to compromise even when compromise is the most equitable solution.

The most obvious conflicts in which the First Amendmentists are right to hew to the hard line are those cases involving public libraries. About 20 percent of all book-banning attempts involve public libraries—again according to the A.L.A.—and these are cases the book banners almost never deserve to win. These cases show the Moral Majoritarians at their worst, attempting to impose their narrow orthodoxies on the communities in which they live by stripping books they don't like from the library. It turns out, though, that public libraries have done pretty well in book-banning battles—thanks, in part, to the tenacity of librarians, but also to the enlightened views of many communities. In most of the public library cases reported in recent years in the Office of Intellectual Freedom's own newsletter, the local librarians have had little difficulty arousing community support, and, in so doing, thwarting the censor. The Abingdon, Virginia, case is a good example. At the height of the controversy there were community meetings at the library in which the participants overwhelmingly supported the library's position. Today the books are still on the shelf (they were never taken off) and the controversy seems to be dying a natural death.

The one type of case cropping up in community after community that is a bit stickier involves books dealing with sexual material that is on the children's shelves. But even here, the public libraries don't really lose. The book most often in dispute is a photographic primer entitled *Show Me*, which shows in explicit detail pictures of children touching each others' genitals and watching their elders make love. When questions about the book have been raised, the solution has usually been to put the book on adult shelves—no great defeat for the First Amendment.

BUT MOST modern-day book-banning incidents involve not public libraries, but school libraries and curricula. These are vastly more troubling cases, for at least three reasons. First, they involve schools—and conceptions of what schools should be. Although schools are supposed to be places where children learn to shop in the marketplace of ideas, they also serve an important "socialization" function. Along with teaching grammar and math, they are supposed to instill some sense of respect for the nation and its institutions. One byproduct of this role is that when individuals or groups like the Moral Majority see what they feel is a breakdown of values in society, one of the institutions they choose to blame is the schools. Listen, for instance, to one Lottie Beth Hobbs of Forth Worth, Texas, a woman who runs an organization called the Pro-Family Forum. "Have you worried about your children being negative and depressed?" she writes in a recent issue of her newsletter. "Have you grieved over the lack of respect for authority? Have you wondered why society takes violence and death so lightly? Could there be any relationship between these attitudes and educational materials to which children are

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exposed?" Needless to say, her answer is yes, and she goes on to quote from books she believes inculcate students with wrong ideas. (Sample, from *A Healthier You*: "Marijuana is one of the most misunderstood drugs. Marijuana has not been found to cause physical dependence as some people think. . . . ") Liberals—and most librarians I talked to—will say that this is a classic example of blaming the messenger. "When people are confused by a changing society, they'll always go after the schools," one Texas librarian told me. "It's an easy target. It's one thing you feel like you can have some control over even if everything else is going to hell." But that attitude misses an important point, which is that these are serious concerns, deeply felt by their proponents. It is not enough to dismiss them as silly or irrelevant or dumb. When people see their children bringing home books that offend their values, their reaction, naturally enough, is to want to get rid of those books.

CARTOON BY BEN SARGENT FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

A second reason these are troubling cases is that they involve children. Hardly anyone believes that a ten-year-old has an unfettered First Amendment right. Most of us believe parents should have some measure of control over what their children see and read; it is an elemental part of parenthood. This is easy enough to recognize in a situation where, say, the clerk at the corner candy store is letting children leaf through copies of *Hustler* magazine; it's a lot harder to perceive when a book like Malamud's *The Fixer* is under attack as a "corrupter of youth," and the school librarian is playing the role of the candy store clerk. Alas, most book-banning cases bear a far greater resemblance to the latter case than to the former.

The third reason that school library cases are different from public library cases is the element of coercion that is unavoidable in public education. Attendance at school, unlike visiting the public library, is mandatory; and kids who aren't in a private school must, by law, go to public school. In this context, First Amendment choice is more problematic. There are three possible targets of censorship in schools: in descending order of compulsion and ascending order of First Amendment applicability, they are textbooks, books written for the general reader that are assigned reading in class, and books in the school library. Textbooks give the official, state-approved version of reality, and they are written expressly for use in classrooms. Therefore it is neither strange nor alarming that decisions about which textbooks to use and what should be in them are political as well as pedagogical. The resulting controversies can easily lead to textbooks that are bland or untruthful, but those controversies are obviously legitimate. The other two categories are far less obviously legitimate arenas for political decision-making, but any book on the (usually uncrowded) shelves of a school library, even if no one is obliged to read it, in some sense carries the imprimatur of the state on it. Given that, it's not surprising that parents—not to mention local school boards—want to have some voice in which books are placed on those shelves.

This is not to say that the perceptions of the book banners are necessarily, or even usually, correct. On the contrary, for sheer wrong-headedness, it is hard to top some of their concerns. Typically, the book banners haven't read the books they are complaining about, but have seen only excerpts containing the most salacious quotations. (Sometimes they haven't even seen that much. One group complained that a book called *Make It With Mademoiselle* was in the school library. They assumed that the book was some sort of sex manual, and in this they assumed wrong; the book, which was published by *Mademoiselle* magazine, was about making dresses.) The list of important, worthwhile books that the right would like to ban is impressive, from Salinger's *Catcher in the Rye* to *The Fixer*, from Studs Terkel's *Working* to hundreds of others. "No girl was ever ruined by a book," Mayor Jimmie Walker of New York once said.

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The banners disagree; they are even afraid of dictionaries. No doubt most of us can remember a time or two as children when we looked up a dirty word and giggled over it. Looking back, these hardly seem to have been corrupting experiences, or even important ones. (Also, anyone who has ever been a student where one of these controversies raged knows that the surest way to get every kid in school to read a given book is to ban it. And these controversies, whatever their cost in psychic pain to faculty and administrators, often end up teaching kids more about politics, law, and liberty than any book could.)

But the issue here is not whether the perceptions of the Moral Majority types are dismaying; it's whether these people have a right to act on their beliefs. Do people who want to shield their children from works they believe are "immoral" or "unpatriotic" have a right to do so, or is their right inferior to the rights of parents who want the schools to expose their children to those books (in the belief, of course, that they will not harm their children)? Or must the desires of parents give way to other considerations—the expertise of teachers and librarians, or the generally acknowledged merit of the book in question, or some First Amendment consideration? These are the thorny questions at the heart of every school library controversy—and it is these questions, having as much to do with the role of schools and the rights of parents as with the First Amendment, that librarians, and the rest of us who endorse the Bill of Rights, must face.

THE 'PICO' CASE shows how elusive the issue can be. *Pico* began in September 1975, when three members of the Island Trees school board attended a conference sponsored by a right-wing group called Parents of New York-United. A list of "objectionable" books was passed around, along with selected passages from the books. Though most of the books were on the list because of their language or their description of sex, there is no doubt that at least some of them were there because of their political content. PONY-U said of Eldridge Cleaver's *Soul On Ice*: "This book was retained for seniors only in Randolph. The book is full of anti-American material and hate for white women. Why would teachers want high school students to read this?????" The three board members (in typical fashion) never got around to reading the books before they scoured their own high school library, where they found eleven books on the list. They were: *Go Ask Alice* (an anonymous diary of a drug addict); *A Reader for Writers*, edited by Jerome W. Archer; *A Hero Ain't Nothin' but a Sandwich*, by Alice Childress; *Soul on Ice; Best Short Stories by Negro Writers; Laughing Boy*, by Oliver La Farge; *The Fixer; The Naked Ape*, by Desmond Morris; *Down These Mean Streets*, by Piri Thomas; *Slaughterhouse Five*, by Kurt Vonnegut; and *Black Boy*, by Richard Wright. The board immediately ordered the books banished from the library shelves.

There was an instantaneous uproar in the press and in the school system itself (with the high school principal leading the opposition), and the board was forced to backtrack a bit. It set up a committee of eight people to review the books and make recommendations. Over the next few months, the committee voted to return six of the books to the library, including *The Fixer* (though not *Soul on Ice* or *Slaughterhouse Five*). But on July 28, 1976, the school board met and reversed the committee's recommendations, restoring only two books—*Laughing Boy* and *Black Boy*—to the shelves. In the meantime, a number of school board members who were deeply involved in the book bannings ran for reelection, using their actions in the case as their primary reelection platform, and won.

INSTEAD OF putting up candidates to oppose those board members who wanted to ban books, the First Amendmentists turned to the courts for relief. A group of students, led by high school student council president Steven Pico, sued the board, claiming their First Amendment rights to those books had been violated. A lower court judge summarily dismissed the case. (Lower courts have tended to side with school boards in such matters on the theory that the judiciary can't get involved in every dispute over school policy, and that school boards have to have some leeway.) The Second Court of Appeals reversed that dismissal, saying in a 2-to-1 decision that the case should be tried before a jury to discover whether or not the books had been removed for political reasons—a clear infringement of First Amendment rights—instead of for "obscenity" reasons. (Over the course of the fight, the board had learned not to emphasize its political concerns and to play instead its obscenity card, which was much safer in court.) The key was motivation: what was going on in the minds of the school board members when they took the books off the library shelves? Now the Supreme Court has spoken, and the effect of its ruling is that Moral Majority types can no longer haul books away from libraries on the grounds that they are "anti-American," but they can plead for their removal on the grounds of smuttiness. (On August 12 the Island Trees school board finally voted to return all nine books to the shelves, after being advised by its lawyer and receiving a petition signed by 1,200 parents urging members to relent.)

Half a dozen amicus curiae briefs were filed in the *Pico* case. The one from the Long Island Library Association seemed a clear example of where librarians go wrong. The library association stressed the "credentials" of the books—including reviews and "brief summaries of the literary credentials of their authors." It stressed the First Amendment point. It made its own professional turf argument: "In direct contravention of the superintendent's express recommendations, not a single professional librarian was appointed to the [review] committee. Although much was made in the

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court papers about the 'informed discussion and deliberation' among the committee members, it is self-evident that there was no one present at those discussion to explain the professional judgment that went into the original selection of the books. . . ."

More important than what it contained, though, was what was missing from this brief. There was not a word about obscenity. There was no effort to make any distinction between books like *The Fixer* and other books that might be of less educational merit. There was nothing, in fact, that recognized the concerns of the school board members and the many other people in the community who agreed with their actions. The brief simply assumed that if a librarian had decided to put these books on the Island Trees shelves, then that must be a good decision, and anyone who thought otherwise must be an enemy of the First Amendment.

ARE THE BOOKS obscene? *The Fixer* isn't, nor is *Slaughterhouse Five*, and most of the adults I know can read all of those books without being put off by their use of "dirty" words. On the other hand, listen to this, from *Go Ask Alice*: "Doris was ten and had humped with who knows how many men. . . ." Or: "Another day, another blow job. . . . If I don't give Big Ass a blow he'll cut off my supply." Defenders of *Go Ask Alice* say that its value lies in the authenticity of its graphic descriptions of a junkie's life, and would say that those quotes are taken out of context, as indeed they are (the book's sprinkling of "dirty" words were carefully listed in the dissenting judge's opinion in the *Pico* case: "shitty, goddamned, pissing . . . "). Even so, should the wishes of parents who want to prevent their kids from seeing such material be automatically superseded by the judgment of a professional librarian? Does *Go Ask Alice* belong on a school library shelf at all? Like *Soul on Ice* and a host of other books, it seems a product more of the ebbing fad for "relevance" than of a carefully conceived school library policy. *Go Ask Alice* would clearly be worth fighting for in a public library or bookstore case, but need we go to the mat for such a book in a school library case? Is this a battle that has to be won, lest the First Amendment fall?

"Young students," wrote a Second Circuit judge in a similar case, "have no constitutionally protected right of access on school property to material that, whatever its literary merits, is fairly characterized as vulgar and indecent in the school context." Librarians, and other First Amendmentists, don't see that; so instead of saving their strength for battles that do count—over *Huckleberry Finn*, say, or *The Fixer*—they're spending too much time and energy worrying about whether *Go Ask Alice* will be removed from the shelf.

The opponents librarians face in these battles are not invariably ogres or nuts. Last November, the Office of Intellectual Freedom devoted its monthly newsletter to the subject of "Intellectual Freedom in the '80s: The Impact of Conservatism." The format was a symposium, and it was one of the very few times that the A.L.A. has given space to an opponent, in this case Michael Farris, Washington State's Moral Majority spokesman. Farris, in his remarks, came across as such a model of reasonableness that he stood the stereotype on its head. He spoke of his concerns as a parent and as a taxpayer, but he also conceded that libraries had to be places where people could find diversity, and books and opinions with which he disagreed. He made the obvious comparison between books like *Show Me*, around which there is often a great outcry when it is put on the restricted shelf, and books like *Little Black Sambo*, which have been removed from children's shelves without a peep. And, in closing, he said this: "The tension over books . . . are not going to cease. You must work with us, just as we must work with you. Neither side can insist on the luxury of always being right. We simply ask that libraries show the same sensitivity to the feelings of people who believe in traditional morality that has generally been shown to blacks in the context of materials selection. I think every group is entitled to legitimate and sensitive consideration of its feelings."

IN THE SAME issue of the newsletter was a First Amendmentist piece written by Dr. Charles Park, a professor of education at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater. By way of contrast, here's how he saw the problem: "The behavior of organizations and individuals who seek to restrict our First Amendment guarantees . . . are remarkably predictable. . . . Their need for certainty is pervasive in their embrace of absolutist perceptions. This need among some is such that they seek to embrace the rhetoric of charismatic leaders who will tell them what to do. They need to dominate others and to be dominated in turn . . . The strategy of extremism is to breed fear and tension. . . . There is a substantial body of psychological data that suggests that underlying the appearance of moral certainty and clear perception in true believers is a fear of self, due in part to an early childhood training marked by stern punishment and unbending standards that teach power rather than logic. . . . For many the world is divided into two separate and warring camps of right and wrong. This attitude is often accompanied by sexual fears and other psychological aberrations."

Unhappily, not all Moral Majoritarians display Michael Farris's comparative open-mindedness; happily, not all First Amendmentists indulge in Dr. Park's brand of arrogant dime-store psychoanalysis. In the natural order of things, the book banners are usually wrong and the librarians are usually right; and where public libraries are concerned, a rigid insistence on the applicability of the First Amendment is not misplaced. But in the public schools, where a built-in tension between liberty and authority is inevitable, there is room for compromising as well as for crusading.

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STANLEY KAUFFMANN ON FILMS

Three of a Kind, Alas

An Officer and a Gentleman
(Paramount)

Barbarosa
(Universal)

Night Shift
(Ladd/Warner Bros.)

You've seen the small ads in the backs of magazines inviting you to send in your wide ties and have them narrowed. Tie-narrowing goes on in Hollywood, too: old-fashioned ideas are made chic (they hope) with up-to-date permissiveness and cinematics. I hope the tie renovators are more successful than three recent refurbishings of stock films.

Few ideas have seen longer service in Hollywood than the one about military training as the molding of a man. Military school, West Point, Annapolis, Marine boot camp—the long gray-blue-white-etc. line stretches far into the past. Well folks, it's here again, that very same picture, only this time the girl friends show their breasts and get into bed nekkid with the trainees instead of just necking. Otherwise *An Officer and a Gentleman* is *Tom Brown of Culver* (1932), *An Annapolis Story* (1953), *The Long Gray Line* (1955), *The Boys in Company C* (1977), and many others, all over again. *An O. and a G.* is just one more saga of a cub who gets the brashness knocked out of him, learns about discipline and responsibility, and ends with the same old brushed-back tear of gratitude for the drillmaster who had been so tough on him for his own good. As has been the custom in recent years, the drillmaster here is black.

The setting this time is the Naval Aviation Officer Candidate School in Port Rainier, Washington, the girls are factory workers called "Puget Sound debs," the difficult lad who will turn out all right is Richard Gere, the drillmaster is Louis Gossett Jr. The only substantive differences between the script and the mountain of ancestor scripts behind it are the frankness of language and sexual display and the fact that the weakling in the group of recruits—don't worry, they haven't left *him* out—isn't turned around and bucked up, he gets in a jam and kills himself. But the hero, who has once again told his date that he isn't really interested in getting serious, that this is just fun in training school, once again at the last minute rushes around to where she works and carries her off in his arms.

That last sequence gave me my favorite moment. Gere is carrying the girl down the aisle between the machines in the paper factory where she works, and her girl friend—who had lied to the "weak" cadet about being pregnant and had caused his suicide, but who is still the heroine's best friend—gets tears in her eyes and leads the applause for the happy couple. If only the picture had been built backward from that moment, it might have been a sharp send-up of the genre.

Well, there was one other moment of promise—at the beginning. Gere's father is an old gob, just a seaman who has spent his life in the Navy serving and drinking and whoring. When he parted from his son, as the boy set out to be an officer, I thought they might encounter again at some point. But Pa just disappears from the picture, taking any novelty with him except the "tie-narrowing" sex stuff.

Louis Gossett Jr. is in fine physical shape. Richard Gere may be, too, but he always looks to me like a life-size flexible doll, rubbery.

Barbarosa is a different kettle of the same basic fish—another "modernized" treatment of a formula. This time it's the Western, in its Mexican border manifestation: on one side, Hispanic pride, on the other, Yankee free spirit. The author of the screenplay, William D. Wittliff, knows something about Texas, so he has drawn on the presence of German settlers for some of his atmospheric varnish, and he has caused the film to be shot in (a Texan friend tells me) Big Bend National Park, which (the Texan friend tells me) is more beautiful than John Ford's Monument Valley in Utah. Well, the landscape is certainly the most attractive part of the picture.

This is one of those pictures that try to manufacture legendary heroes; wide-eyed Mexican peasants whisper the man's name behind their grubby paws. Barbarosa—nothing to do with Friedrich Barbarossa or Kurosawa's Red Beard—had a red beard before it became grizzled: he's a loner who spends most of his time out in the wilds being a bandit, then mysteriously appears, briefly, to visit his wife, the daughter of a hidalgo—she's now middle-aged—who waits for him lovingly and patiently, no matter how long it has been between his appearances. What a male fantasy. This charismatic figure is played by (hold on to your truss) Willie Nelson, growling out of the side of his mouth with as much authoritative taciturnity as he can muster. There has to be a tenderfoot to whom he can show off his desert wisdom; here it's a German farm boy, played by Gary Busey, who gives the only creditable performance in the film, as a sort of callow Andy Devine.

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Birgit Haas Must be Killed. Philippe Noiret and Jean Rochefort are substantial in this far-above-average political thriller about French agents trapping a German terrorist in Germany.

E. T., The Extra-Terrestrial. Heard of it? Much of the good that you've heard is true.

The Judge and the Assassin. A French mountain town, 1893. Bertrand Tavernier's splendid film about a politically ambitious magistrate and a mad mass killer. Wonderful in virtually every way.

A Midsummer Night's Sex Comedy. O.K. Woody Allen's turn-of-the-century country-weekend plot meanders painlessly and sometimes amusingly.

SK

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On Barbarosa's wedding night many moons ago, some killings occurred, so Mrs. Barbarosa's father, proud Gilbert Roland, is still pretty upset about his son-in-law. Busey killed another German man in a quarrel back home, so the corpse's family are gunning for him. Then there is the promise of romance between Barbarosa's daughter and Busey, and—well, let's just add that there's a scene in which Barbarosa, after being shot in the stomach, climbs a 100-foot cliff, hauls himself over the top, and allows as he feels a little pain. That should fix the sobriety of the script for you.

The updating element here was supposed to be in the cinematics. The Australian director, Fred Schepisi, was apparently engaged to give the picture class, in look and manner. Schepisi made the impressive Australian race drama, *The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith* (TNR, September 20, 1980), but, like many another foreign director imported to the U.S., Schepisi goes off his cinematic rocker here. Even if you concede genre conventions to the script, it's still impossible to understand how Schepisi could have accepted this balderdash. And visually he has loaded the film with almost incessant immense close-ups. Not only is this like a composer calling for cymbals on every other beat, the close-ups make it tough for us to get a look at Big Bend National Park.

I hope that Schepisi will go home quickly, before it's too late, and will send us more films about the matters he understands through nativity, rather than through American films.

Then there's the shnook picture, about a lovable innocent who gets into jams through his lovable innocence. That formula produced one of the best Hollywood films, *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town* (1936) with Gary Cooper, and many of the worst, like *The Magnificent Dope* (1942) with Henry Fonda. Now that formula too is run through the updating machine and comes out with a new candidate for All-time Worst of Breed: *Night Shift* with Henry Winkler. It's about a browbeaten nighttime morgue attendant who gets conned into using his cars and facilities for a bevy of call girls.

Jokes about call girls get less and less funny every minute. (Attention, Johnny Carson.) *Night Shift* accelerates the pace. As for Winkler, I've seen an aggregate of about seven minutes of his successful TV character, the Fonz, and I've seen several of his films. Obviously he's trying to do pictures in an entirely different image, noncool, nonhip, with heart. So far, no luck.

Two small assets. Michael Keaton, as Winkler's smart pal, plays with comic pace and point. Shelley Long, as the tart for whom Winkler falls (heart of gold, of course), has unforced charm. I mention these matters in fairness, not as inducements to see the picture.

THE WORLD WE HAVE LOST

After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory by Alasdair MacIntyre

(University of Notre Dame Press, 252 pp., $15.95)

We have lived in a dimming era, after virtue, for a very long time. The multiplying perils of modernity turn out to be little less ancient than modernity itself, which was upon us soon after the Renaissance. Nonetheless, it was Jean-Jacques Rousseau who can be said to have truly discovered modernity and disclosed its awesome costs. In the *Discourse on Arts and Sciences*, written in 1751, he rejected the achievements of the modern world with even greater passion than he flailed its corruptions—which he understood as inextricable from "progress."

A century later, Karl Marx, stricken like Rousseau (like all moderns) with dialectical ambivalence about capitalism and the modern civilization it had created, noted that the bonds of traditional society had all been put asunder, leaving relations among men hostage to cold calculation and the cash nexus. "All that is solid," he wrote in anxious

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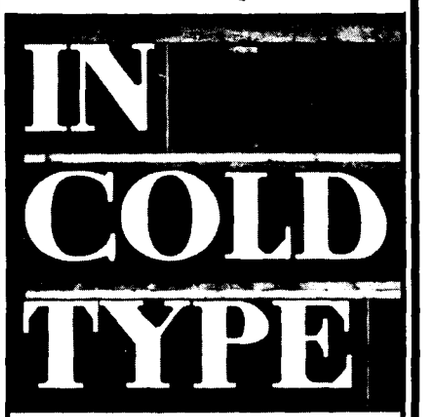

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celebration of emancipation, "melts into air." Still another century later (this year actually, so long has modernity been with us), Marshall Berman organized his ruminations about the new age around this quality of the ephemeral, identifying the experience of modernity with it. "To be modern," he wrote, as if to excuse the charming schizophrenia with which he approached *All That Is Solid Melts Into Air*, "is to be anti-modern."

WHAT THEN is modernity? In part, it is to ask the question, for self-consciousness about time and the character of our moment in it seems to be central to modern consciousness. Where the ancients asked, "How can we live with others in tranquil perpetuity?" and made justice the foundation of their morals, we moderns ask, "How can we live with ourselves today?" and make therapy the foundation of ours. Self-consciousness turns out to be a deadly form of evolution, because individuals who reflect on their origins, query their place in time, dissect their associations, question their convictions, impugn their natural authorities, and analyze their moral principles ultimately make the discovery that their alienating intelligences can win the victory of liberation (the absence of constraints and limits) only at the price of deracination (the absence of roots and meaning). This, the irony of the species' maturation, is the dilemma of modernity. The liberation the race has sought from traditional societies weighed down with the gravity of custom, hierarchy, and bondage to nature and to natural purpose, turns out when won to entail homelessness, arbitrariness, and the impossibility of creating meaningful lives in the absence of natural purpose. Free finally to make our own lives, we peevishly wish that God had never tossed us out of Eden and then crept off like an ailing animal to die in some corner of the cosmos, conspicuously indifferent to our plight, leaving us with the paltry freedom we thought would make us like him.

In common with every critic of modernity since Rousseau, Alasdair MacIntyre suffers from the quality of life after Eden. He yearns for the late childhood of man—not that stormy infancy in heroic societies where virtue was still a matter of the honor and courage of virile warriors, but Aristotle's Athens, where virtue rested on character and character depended on an integral sense of natural human purpose (*telos*) which defined the individual and the polis alike.

MacIntyre's surprising and important new book *After Virtue* thus expresses dissatisfaction both with his own earlier work (*Against the Self-Images of the Age*), and with modern moral theory in general, setting itself squarely against "the ethos of the distinctively modern and modernizing world." To be against modernity is for MacIntyre to be against Kierkegaard and Nietzsche, those seductive prophets of fragmentation and meaninglessness who tried to camouflage the passing of authority as the liberation of will and to make the emergence of nihilism a harbinger of strange new forms of heroism; and it is to be against Max Weber, who offered the novel ectoskeleton of authoritative bureaucracy to moderns who had lost their moral spines and who purveyed in place of virtue the morally neutral norms of efficiency and instrumental rationality. "In our culture," complains MacIntyre,

> we know of no organized movement toward power which is not bureaucratic and managerial in mode and we know of no justifications for authority which are not Weberian in form.

Nietzsche and pointless chaos, or Weber and pointless order: these would seem to be our only choices. Or Aristotle. It is in fact to a slightly modernized Aristotle that MacIntyre looks as a riposte to the value relativity and the ensuing moral impoverishment of the modern world. *After Virtue* thus soon becomes a contest for the soul of modern man between Aristotle and the ill-assorted but potent forces of Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, and Weber.

The contention of these forces makes MacIntyre's book spellbinding—though in the manner of a very esoteric and carefully prepared witch's brew.

IT WAS WINTER

Winter came, as it does in this valley.
After eight dry months, rain fell
And the mountains, straw-colored, turned green for a while.
In the canyons where grey laurels
Graft their stony roots to granite,
Streams no doubt filled the dried-up creekbeds.
Ocean winds churned the eucalyptus trees
And under clouds torn by a crystal of towers,
Prickly lights were glowing on the docks.

This is not a place where you sit under a cafe awning
On a marble piazza, watching the crowd,
Or play the flute at a window over a narrow street
While children's sandals clatter in the vaulted entryway.

They heard of a land, empty and vast,
Bordered by mountains. So they went, leaving behind crosses
Of thorny wood and traces of campfires.
As it happened, they spent winter in the snow of a mountain pass
And drew lots and boiled the bones of their companions,
So that afterwards a hot valley where indigo could be grown
Seemed beautiful to them; and beyond, where fog
Heaved into shoreline coves, an ocean labored.

Sleep: rocks and capes will lie down inside you,
War councils of motionless animals in a barren place,
Basilicas of reptiles, a frothy whiteness.
Sleep on your coat, while your horse nibbles grass
And an eagle takes the measure of a precipice.

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There are no fireworks, no novel incantations, or word alchemies. Unlike Marshall Berman, MacIntyre does not sweep across the terrain of modernity like Quixote, tilting with phantom czars, poets, architects, terrorists, dissidents, and the likes of Robert Moses. His heroes include Jane Austen and Trotsky along with Aristotle, and his reference points include Shakespeare and Sophocles as well as G. E. Moore and John Rawls, but his argument is that of a philosopher. Nor does he try, like Richard Sennett in that paean to the collapse of civility, *The Fall of Public Man*, to give us a socio-historical portrait of morals in decline. What MacIntyre offers is a philosophical diagnosis of modernity, using the sickliness of modern morals as an illustrative pathology and the philosophical history of morals as a diagnostic tool.

MacIntyre begins with the observation that "the most striking feature of contemporary moral utterance is that so much of it is used to express disagreements." This is a sign that, although "we possess simulacra of morality . . . we have—very largely, if not entirely—lost our comprehension, both theoretical and practical, of morality." We now confront a series of crises inseparable from modernity itself: the transformation of philosophy, once a consolation, into a fractious academic discipline; the fragmentation of personal identity into roles we choose at will but wear without conviction; the "bogus logic" of norms detached from the natural world and thereby robbed of their authority (the so-called "is-ought" distinction); the substitution of mechanical scientistic thinking (behavioralism, emotivism) for the truly human sciences; and the conversion of politics from the art of expressing virtue in a public setting into what is little more than "civil war carried on by other means." To live with these calamities of deracination is to live not only after virtue but "in a state so disastrous that there are no longer remedies for it."

Well, not quite. If we were beyond all remedy as well as beyond virtue, then MacIntyre would be Jeremiah, and his dense, poignant, revealing history of morals would be superfluous. But the antimodern MacIntyre is sufficiently tainted by modernity to wish for hope and to want to put analysis to the purposes of remediation. Like every philosopher who has confronted the species *in extremis*—and the species has been more or less permanently *in extremis* (Aristotle's Athens was well into its dotage as he composed his *Nicomachean Ethics* for the Age of Alexander)—MacIntyre is a doctor to his era's travail, and he hopes against hope that if only we can *understand* our pathologies, we can overcome them. Aristotle or no, MacIntyre is not beyond a little Baconian hubris: to see, to know, to understand, may still be to remake the world.

What MacIntyre wishes us to understand above all is that virtue must rest on character and character must rest on a common sense of the meaning and purpose of human life—something which must be given by the oral traditions and narrative history of society if not by nature itself. Aristotle had so much to teach us because he perceived that virtue was related to the skills involved in living a good human life; this in turn depended upon grasping what a good human life looked like by reference to natural and historical ends, the kind of aims disclosed when a life was seen as a story rather than as a series of isolated acts and events.

MOVING FROM the Aristotelian to his own neo-Aristotelian conception of morals, MacIntyre can thus argue that the exercise of virtue always exhibits a "practice," namely, a "socially established cooperative human activity" with its own goods internal to the activity itself. A virtue in this sense is "an acquired human quality, the possession and exercise of which tends to enable us to achieve those goods which are internal to practices." Despite the utilitarians, virtue can therefore not be defined by external goods; and despite Kant, it cannot be defined by the subjugation of the passions to rational will, and thus equated with altruism. Virtues conjure up skills appropriate to practices, a way of living harmonious with the purposes of a life; as such,

When you wake up, you will have the parts of the world.
West, an empty conch of water and air.
East, always behind you, the voided memory of snow-covered fir.
And extending from your outspread arms,
Nothing but bronze grasses, north and south.

We are poor people, much afflicted.
We camped under various stars,
Where you scoop water with a cup from a muddy river
And cut a slice of bread with a pocket knife.
This is the place, accepted, not chosen.
We remembered that there were streets where we came from
So there had to be houses here, a saddler's signboard,
A small veranda, and a chair. But empty, a country where
Thunder beneath the rippled skin of the earth,
Breaking waves, a patrol of pelicans nullified us.
As if our vases, brought here from another shore,
Were the dug-up spearheads of some lost tribe
Who fed on lizards and acorn flour.

And here I am walking the eternal earth.
Tiny, leaning on a stick.
I pass a volcanic park, lie down at a spring,
Not knowing how to express what is always and everywhere:
The earth that I cling to is so solid
Under my breast and belly that I feel grateful
For every pebble, and I don't know whether
It is my pulse or the Earth's that I hear
When the hems of invisible silk vestments pass over me,
Hands, wherever they have been, touch my arm,
Or small laughter, once, long ago over wine,
With lanterns in the magnolias, for my house is huge.

CZESLAW MILOSZ

translated by Renata Gorczynski, Robert Hass, and Robert Pinsky

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they cannot be defined in isolation from human relationships or from the narrative histories in which relationships are necessarily embedded. Virtue thus always requires "acceptance of some prior account of certain features of social and moral life in terms of which it has to be defined and explained," and it may differ in content (although not in form) from one culture or one era to the next.

In Homeric civilization, the relations of men in a warrior society created heroic virtues like courage and honor (replicated in the Medieval Age of Chivalry); in early Athens, human relations were defined as political relations (relations within the polis), and political virtues, such as justice, that were deemed indispensable to the practice of politics came to define morality. In the Christian Middle Ages, the excellences of Christian relations in communities of faith were associated with virtues like faith, hope, and charity. Each of these conceptions is distinctive, and may seem incompatible with the others. But they share virtue's form, in that they all describe a particular historical setting for human relations, and they all assume the authority of certain social purposes and human aims.

THIS CONCEPTION of virtue, extrapolated from MacIntyre's intellectual history of morals, enables him to diagnose the calamity of modernity. We live after virtue in a cantankerous society that can agree upon nothing, and we associate morals with feuding academic schools not because we have forgotten the meaning of virtue, but because we have lost the underlying sense of a community defined by common purposes on which virtue depends. Without a context of community within which our purposes are intelligible, the discussion of justice can only proceed (as it does, for example, in John Rawls or Robert Nozick) on the basis of individual interests and arbitrary ends. When identity becomes a matter of trying on roles (which, like masks, invent rather than disclose a persona), there cease to be characters in whom virtues can be invested. Role players, whether they are Sartre's spontaneous creators of meaning or Erving Goffmann's playful manipulators of self-consciousness, are immune to virtue.

Thus, no one of the three chief players in MacIntyre's drama of modernity is conversant with virtue or its practices. There is the aesthete "who lounges so insolently at the entrance to the modern world," but he is a cynical scoundrel who "sees through the illusory and fictitious claims" of moderns only in order to rub meaninglessness into their cowardly faces. And there is the therapist, who specializes not in disingenuous truth but in ingenuous deception (self-deception too), helping us to live with the lies that enable us to live without truth and meaning (which the aesthete has already demonstrated can no longer exist). And then there is that great modern facilitator, the manager, who offers the solace of a morally neutral expertise, and—to fill the gap left by the vanishing of virtue—proffers efficient means to any and all ends we might arbitrarily opt for. With the guidance of these soulless dissemblers, we learn to live with, if hardly to love, life after virtue.

A POWERFUL and revealing indictment of modernity. Yet for all of its argumentative ingenuity and its rhetorical conviction, MacIntyre's confrontation with the new age lacks the vital dialectical quality that has been so essential to modern assaults on modernity. His undialectical, almost Manichaean polarization of culture into the era of virtue and the era after virtue compromises his search for a way out of the modern crisis and raises questions about the ultimate ideological tenor of his argument—which finally appears to be much more conservative than we (or MacIntyre himself) might expect. There is no modern thinker from Diderot and Voltaire to Adorno and Michael Oakeshott who has not, with Hegel, been impressed by the "cunning of reason," and has not, with T. S. Eliot, been troubled by a history in whose "contrived corridors . . . unnatural vices are fathered by our heroism (and) virtues are forced upon us by our impudent crimes."

Rousseau, Hegel, Marx, and their successors all greeted the modern era with an apt ambivalence. It was not that modernity brought with it ills to match its achievements and new forms of emptiness to compensate its liberties: it was that emptiness and liberty, corruption and achievement, were recognized as dialectical moments in a single ethos—the evolution of consciousness toward a reflexivity that was at once liberating and alienating. Thus Rousseau hopes for perfection even as he fears corruption and sees in the perdition of man's lost innocence the promise of his salvation. Thus Hegel gleans from the slaughter-bench of history signs of reason's progress, and sees in every cross a seedling rose that may explain and justify what is suffered in the cross's name. Thus Marx construes the extremes of wage slavery as the price of capitalism's progress toward centralization and efficiency, and perceives in exploitation and class war unhappy instruments of necessary historical change.

BUT FOR MacIntyre, bleak Manichaean that he often seems to become in the pages of *After Virtue*, there is no secret germ of redemption in modern despair, no rose thrusting from the cross, no hidden purpose served by the long fall from virtue that describes man's journey through Enlightenment into new darkness. If the modern era is without promise, the era of virtue sometimes seems in MacIntyre's vision to be without blemish. His Aristotle is faultless and thus beyond dialectic. In fact, Thrasymachus plied wares in ancient times no less cynical and corrosive than those of the modern emotivists and interest mongers—"justice is but the interest of the strongest," he proclaimed, leering at a dumbfounded Socrates who never gave him a satisfactory answer; but his name is not to be found in the index of *After Virtue*. Athenian and Spartan men made virtuous citizens to be sure, but they numbered among them helots, slaves, and "barbarians," for whom virtue meant the willing surrender of their humanity. Aristotle's treatment of slavery is not prominent in MacIntyre's treatment of Aristotle. "How can that which we adapt for no reason (modern morals) have any authority over us?" asks MacIntyre, identifying a central conundrum of the world after virtue; but he fails to identify the dialectical counterpart of the question—"How can that which in effect adopts us (ascriptive morals or natural teleology) be truly ours or permit us to be free?"—which is the central conundrum of the world in its earlier era "during virtue."

Modernity has a difficult time with meaning, with community, and with natural authority, but it offers freedom and equality a great deal more hospitality than was enjoyed earlier. After virtue is after Eden, but it is also after hierarchy, after slavery, after superstiti-

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tion, and after ignorance. When Voltaire inscribed the fateful words, *"Ecrasez l'infâme!"*, it was not virtue he wished to extirpate, but the vices of the social conditions which, among other things, had made virtue possible. Theodore Adorno's *Dialectic of Enlightenment* is thus finally a more accurate assessment of what Voltaire wrought—the vices he destroyed and the vices he made possible—than MacIntyre's *After Virtue*, and dialectics is the difference.

Indeed, by failing to assume a posture that is dialectical, MacIntyre's brilliant attack on the modern age risks assimilation to points of view—surely not his—that are conservative or even reactionary. When he comes to that inevitable question facing every reflective modern wishing to change the world—What is to be done?—his vision dims in two disquietingly crucial ways.

FIRST, he seems to grow uncertain about what he is actually arguing. Have we experienced a history that places us beyond both virtue and redemption, a state "so disastrous" that nothing can be done? Or is it that we have committed too many philosophical errors? "Was it right in the first place to reject Aristotle?" he queries, as if to rectify that mistake might remake our world. "Can Aristotle's ethics . . . be vindicated?" he wonders, as if to set history straight we need only put our arguments in order, and reorient our philosophical curricula to the advantage of Aristotle and Augustine and Aquinas and at the expense of Hume and Nietzsche and Weber? This antihistorical intellectualism would seem, on the evidence of MacIntyre's own analysis, to be preposterous; the crux of his argument is precisely that it is not so much virtue as the social structures and cultural ethos from which it grew that have been "irrevocably lost." If this is so, vindicating Aristotle is an exercise in despair.

Second, if the explicit philosophical lessons to be learned from reading the history of morals are muddy, then we are left only with ideological lessons which, while implicit, are more obvious. Rue the past, detest the present, fear the future. Political movements organized around these injunctions, a far cry from MacIntyre's careful analysis, have done less to reestablish past virtues than to destroy what vestiges of them remain to prop up our civilization. MacIntyre's only piece of explicit political counsel is this:

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> What matters at this stage is the construction of local forms of community within which civility and the intellectual and moral life can be sustained through the new dark ages which are already upon us.

What that can possibly mean in an era of multinational corporations, economic interdependence, irredentist nationalism, religious fundamentalism, and the constant threat of nuclear oblivion is not spelled out. Communes? (run by dropouts?) Universities? (God forbid!) Churches? (run by Reverend Falwell and company?)

The lesson with which MacIntyre leaves us is in fact deeply conservative—a lugubrious rejection of all that is modern but with no possibility of retrieving the virtues of a past irrevocably lost. He still does obeisance to Trotsky and St. Benedict, but he offers only a counsel of despair. In place of Marshall Berman's ambiguous joy in wandering among the spinning artifacts of a modern world in whirl, there is only regret for old worlds forever lost. In place of an indulgent American delight in empty space, free movement, and the great open road (leading nowhere), there is a European longing for the orderliness of confined space and well defined motion. There is in the accent with which MacIntyre inflects his arguments something fearful, something cramped, something profoundly anxious. A voice suited perhaps to our age, but unsuited to the purposes of renovation.

It may simply be that MacIntyre has spent too much time in cities like Boston, where he has taught in recent years. Boston is too arch and reserved to be a truly corrupt capital city in Rousseau's sense, but it is urbane, cosmopolitan, immoral, uprooted, and otherwise resplendent with the corruptions of the age. Perhaps in assuming his chair at Vanderbilt (to which, it is reported, he is moving), in that seat of all that is "country," he will discover the consolations of a simpler age, and find reason for hope. After all, Rousseau conceived his attack on modernity while living in Paris, and composed his more sanguine works like the *Emile* and the *Social Contract* in bucolic exile.

Of course Nashville is also closer to the Bible Belt and that American heartland where racism is still an honest man's option, and MacIntyre may also discover, along with a simpler life more in tune with virtue, all of virtue's ancient vices that make some of us glad, for all the perils of modernity, that we live in its lengthening shadow rather than in the parching sun of ancient Athens.

BENJAMIN R. BARBER

Benjamin R. Barber is professor of political science at Rutgers University, the editor of *Political Theory*, and author of the forthcoming *Strong Democracy* (University of California Press).

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A MORAL REVOLUTIONARY

Let the Trumpet Sound: The Life of Martin Luther King, Jr. by Stephen B. Oates

(Harper & Row, 416 pp., $18.95)

When Robert Kennedy tried to get Dr. King to call off the freedom rides, he appealed to patriotism: "The President is going abroad, and this is embarrassing him." It is hard to remember how unthinkable criticism of America was as the 1960s began. William Buckley said the civil rights movement was de facto pro-Communist, since it gave aid and comfort to the enemy by admitting America was imperfect. People believed that adverting to segregation, not segregation itself, was our national embarrassment. King had to teach America to look at itself before he could begin to change things. Even some black leaders, at the outset, thought he was just causing them more trouble. The man who would seem too moderate, once he had challenged America's moral claims, seemed too radical when it was still un-American to talk of changing America.

It was not a job he asked for. Daddy King had not raised his son to be a radical. The elder King inherited the Ebenezer Baptist Church from his father-in-law, Dr. Adam Daniel Williams (the doctorate was honorary), and earned his own doctor's title at Morris Brown College in Atlanta. Martin Jr. would take the next step—a doctorate from a northern school—and make Ebenezer church even more respectable. Daddy gave him a new Chevrolet when he graduated from Crozer Seminary in Pennsylvania, and King left for Boston University and comparative freedom—from Daddy, from the South, from the local marriage and ministry that had been laid out for him. In graduate school, King became the scholarly ladies' man of a black circle in the Boston-Cambridge area, met Coretta Scott, a student at the New England Conservatory of Music, finished his dissertation (playing Paul Tillich off against Henry Nelson Wieman to reach a synthesis of the two), and hoped to become a professor.

But there were dues to pay. He felt he should spend some time in the South (so long as it was not in Daddy's church), and accepted a call from a church in Montgomery, where the real dues-collector came to him, bearing the unlikely name of Nixon. A tired woman had refused to move to the back of the bus. We do not know how many times that had occurred without anyone hearing of it; but E. D. Nixon, of the porter's union, put Fannie Lou Hamer and Martin King together, and King was forced down a path he had not chosen. He had acquired the right skills without realizing it—an ability to conceive events as moral drama and to convey that conception, along with an academic respect for nonviolent theologies. But he knew that these things were not enough. To employ them all, he would have to accept his own death.

He did not do it all at once; he hoped

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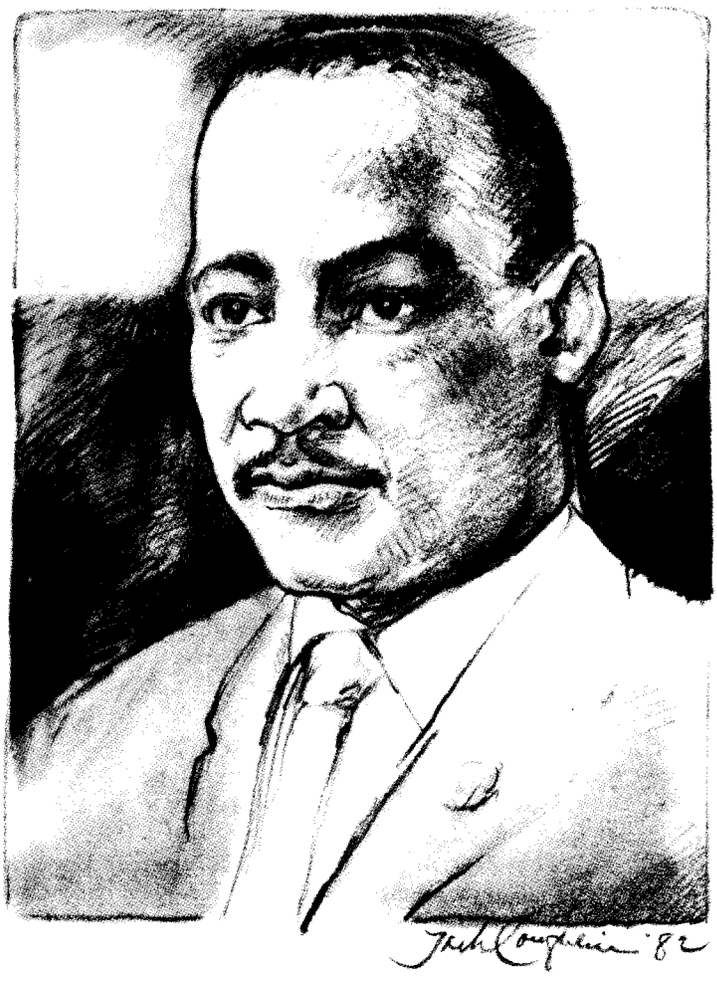
to slip away from the appointment he had made. But it was soon clear to him, as to others around him, that one could not challenge the entire moral basis of a society's racial arrangements without being jailed, beaten, and (finally) killed. Going to jail meant risking death from inmates as well as guards, and he went to jail nineteen times. By 1958 he was telling his wife,

> If anybody had told me a couple of years ago, when I accepted the presidency of the Montgomery Improvement Association, that I would be in this position, I would have avoided it with all my strength. This is not the life I expected to lead. But gradually you take some responsibility, then a little more, until finally you are not in control anymore.

By 1962 a northern editor was instructing his reporter, "Go where the Mahatma goes, he might get killed." By 1968 the Federal Bureau of Investigation had followed up on fifty death threats. He was stabbed; his home was bombed; his church was bombed. His time was running out. Four people had publicly put prices on his head. His wife had recurring nightmares of his murder. An aide remembers that "the strain of wondering when it was coming was almost overpowering."

Those marked out for violence have a special right to anger, a right King had to forswear. His death would be meaningless if it were just another tradeoff of force for force. He moved among his potential assassins, frightened but not retaliating, waiting. Nor was the threat of white violence the only thing that drained him. Stephen Oates is admirably clear about the divisions behind the facade of black solidarity. Various factions and individuals were sniping at King, trying to use him, trying to supplant him. He had to bear all this, try to hold the fragile alliances together, month by month, handling other egos with a patience they did not reciprocate.

How can anyone do such a thing? King thought he did it because he had to—God demanded it of him. Once I denied, on William Buckley's television show, that there had been a religious decline in America, and gave King's career as proof. To which Buckley replied: "He's not in the category, at least in terms of his public performance, of the Christian leader; he's in the category of the civil rights leader, and that's different. And this may be one of the reasons why it becomes so easy to discredit religion, because nobody takes it seriously." Stephen Oates, luckily, gets things straight. He realizes that Dr. King is an important figure in American social and political history *because* he is an important figure in our religious history. King is one of the reasons some people take religion very seriously indeed. His was the most radical critique of America, since it was made *sub specie aeternitatis*. His nonviolent message is as relevant now as in the 1960s. His insistence on a moral assessment of our country's use of its power and wealth becomes more important, not less, as time passes.



DRAWING BY JACK COUGHLIN FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

Though Oates gives a thorough record of King's activities, and gets his priorities right, the book is a bit crippled by normal liberal pieties. King was not a brilliant thinker, as Oates claims. It is significant that no effort has been made to publish his dissertation; and he always needed a great deal of help in writing his books, articles, and speeches. On the matter of infighting in the civil rights movement, Oates is clear on the main lines of conflict, but unspecific about personalities—perhaps for fear of legal problems. On the exaggerated accounts of King's sex life spread by the FBI, Oates makes the not very helpful admission that King was a "passionate" man and tried to avoid compromising situations after he learned of the surveillance. But the prophet is often not "saintly"; and the important matter about King is that he did not let "macho" sexuality affect his views on nonviolence, patience, and the acceptance of suffering.

There is little analysis in Oates's chronicle. The estimate of King remains one of the principal tasks of those who would understand modern America. When Everett Dirksen tidied up the final passage of the civil rights bill, he called it an idea whose time had come. But it took a number of people who were willing to die to make that idea's time come; and King's challenge has not met with an adequate response even to this day. When President Reagan went to a black school in Illinois and was asked about making King's birthday a holiday, he said that other groups might want to have representatives honored if blacks got their way. Like Mr. Buckley, Reagan thinks King spoke just for "them," not for all of us—and *that's* a national embarrassment.

GARRY WILLS

Garry Wills is Henry P. Luce Professor of American Culture at Northwestern University. His most recent book is *The Kennedy Imprisonment* (Little, Brown).

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SOLDIERS AND COMMUNARDS

The War Against Paris, 1871
by Robert Tombs

(Cambridge University Press, 272 pp., $44.50, $14.95 paper)

At the beginning of the summer of 1870, Britain's newly appointed Foreign Secretary, Lord Granville, heaved a sigh of relief and claimed that he could not discern "a cloud in the sky." Peace was everywhere. Yet, by the following summer, the whole face of Europe had changed and with it the balance of power that had existed since Waterloo had been shattered irretrievably. What had happened?

First of all, out of Lord Granville's clear blue sky a small cloud—and it was only a small cloud—had passed across the sun early in July of 1870. This took the shape of a Hohenzollern candidate being nominated, by Prussia's Bismarck, to fill the vacant throne of Spain. Louis Napoleon's France promptly expressed alarm in violent terms that this would constitute an "encirclement" of France. The Prussian candidate was withdrawn, and—in an ideal world—that should have been the end of the matter. But Louis Napoleon felt that Prussia had become too big for its boots and needed humbling; more important, however, was the need for a success abroad to divert his subjects from mounting domestic problems at home. So he pressed for an excessive act of contrition by Prussia. But Bismarck also had his domestic reasons for welcoming a showdown with France, and here seemed a golden opportunity for showing her up in the worst possible light, in an aggressive posture. So he doctored the famous "Ems telegram," making it sound just a little ruder than his amiable and courteous monarch, William I, had intended. Louis Napoleon, whose favorite maxim was *"Il ne faut rien brusqué"* ("don't let's be precipitate") picked up the gauntlet and plunged France into perhaps the most *brusqué* action of her whole existence. Little did Louis Napoleon imagine what the consequences would be, or the chain reaction that would be unleashed, by letting himself be provoked into a war with Prussia.

As a historian, writing this review against the backdrop of Argentina's provoking war with Great Britain over an affair of honor her bankrupt economy could not conceivably afford, one wants to throw up one's hands in despair. What is the point of writing at all, if the politicians will never read history, or study its lessons? Have they not learned, one wonders, from 1870, or from 1914, just how difficult it is to control, or reverse, the dangerous machinery once honor and pride (now called "principles") are engaged?

Back to 1870. Amid fervid cries of *"à Berlin"* from the excited mobs, France declared war on July 15; but it was to Paris the Prussians came, rather than the other way around. After six weeks of disastrous and blitzkrieg defeats, General von Moltke cornered the French Emperor at the head of his army at Sedan (scene of a second cataclysmic French defeat at German hands seventy years later). Three days after his humiliation, a revolt in Paris deposed the captured Emperor and declared a Republic. Against now hopeless odds the new government decided to continue the war. By the third week of September the Prussians had reached and invested Paris. Contrary to all expectations, Paris, besieged and reduced to eating cats and dogs, held out bravely for over four months, while Gambetta raised new armies in the provinces.

One key factor behind this heroic resistance was the existence to the left of the Republican Government of ginger groups of ardent revolutionaries. In contrast to what one might expect today, it was these left-wing firebrands who—considering themselves the true heirs of the revolutionaries of 1789—were most violently belligerent and demanded that the war be fought to the bitter end. Two serious revolts inside the capital persuaded the moderate Republicans of the new government that to fight on against the Prussians was the lesser of two evils.

This in fact only postponed matters. On January 27, 1871, an armistice was signed. Infuriated by the capitulation to the Prussians, followed by elections that returned an even more conservative Republican government, the Paris "Reds" rose up in March and seized an important armory of cannons from the bemused regular army. The next day Thiers, the provisional president, realizing his impotence and the imminent danger of civil war, withdrew the government and the army to Versailles. The "Reds," or *fédérés*, were left in sole charge of Paris and almost immediately proclaimed a "commune." In effect a rival government with strong Jacobin undertones from the Great Revolution, the Commune—despite its name—had little or nothing to do with Communism, although it was greatly to influence Karl Marx and, later, guide Lenin in his direction of the successful Bolshevik Revolution of 1917.

UNDER the tough armistice terms imposed by Bismarck, France's regular army had been much reduced, and had the Communards marched at once on Versailles, they could probably have seized Thiers's government and made themselves masters of France. But they procrastinated fatally for several weeks before making an inept attempt, which was beaten off. From April to May the second Siege of Paris took place; this time conducted by French government troops against the Parisian Communards. At the end of May Paris was invaded and the Commune put down in an appalling bloodbath, with the estimated slaughter of over 20,000 Communards.

The story of the Commune and its suppression has always been a fascinating subject, possessed of considerable relevance for the present day. In *The War Against Paris*, Dr. Tombs—who is a young don at Cambridge University—concentrates on the restructuring of the French Army over the crucial period of March to May 1871. How was it, he asks, that the same army that fraternized with the *fédérés* during the seizure of the Montmartre cannons on March 18 was prepared to crush them so savagely, less than ten weeks later? Dr. Tombs cites the typical army outlook of March: " 'If they make me march against the Parisians, I shall march . . . but in no case will I fire on them. . . . ' " He notes the essential mystery: "Practically none of the soldiers of March fought; practically all the soldiers of May did."

There is probably not much new material still to be unearthed about the Commune, but Dr. Tombs has done a superb job of organization and clarification, throwing light on a subject that has hitherto been inadequately exam-

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ined. Book upon book has been written about the Communards, but very little about the role of the force that put them down. Dr. Tombs begins by skillfully tracing the conflicting loyalties of the post-Napoleonic French Army, and notably as seen in its functions during the insurrections of 1830 and 1848. Used by Louis Napoleon to break strikes in peacetime, the army evoked the most bitter emotions among the Parisian proletariat. On its side, the army in March showed itself generally willing to shoot only if the Communards fired first; this the latter were readily prepared to do—in fact, to survive they had to. Then, once the shooting began, it was to escalate, from atrocity to atrocity, until the final dreadful reckoning on Whitsunday, 1871, when 147 captured Communards were put up against a wall of Père Lachaise Cemetery and mown down.

Dr. Tombs cites three main reasons for the French Army's change of heart in 1871. First of all, it saw itself as representing order against the disorder and mounting anarchy of the Commune. Traditionally bourgeois, army officers feared and hated the Communards' seizure or destruction of private property. The willful conflagration of large parts of Paris during the last days of the Commune was certainly a key factor in the army's ferocity toward the insurgents. Second, the army represented the nation against faction. Third, it held itself to be the champion of liberty against tyranny.

FOLLOWING its defeat by the Prussians, the French Army was indeed a feeble weapon, but its efficacy was greatly raised by the early return home of officers and men taken prisoner during the war. Bismarck would shed few tears over the burning of Paris, but he had no desire to see the bellicose "reds" triumph, or have the contagion possibly spread to Berlin; so he collaborated with Thiers in expediting the return from Germany of the war prisoners. This infusion of veteran blood back into the French Army speedily helped restore discipline and morale. "Everything was rotten in France," said Thiers, "and only the army remained clean and honourable." But its integrity, and what it signified to the resurrection of humiliated France, could not be put at risk. Thus, in its first actions against the Commune, the army's leaders acted with the utmost caution, so as to avoid asking too much of their soldiers. "Even in the middle of

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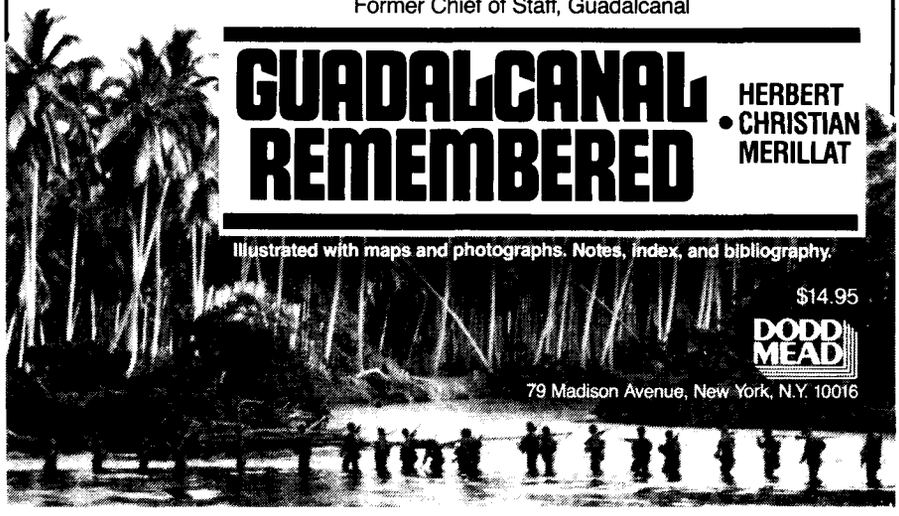

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the fighting," says Dr. Tombs, "the generals could never be sure of the reactions of their men." There was always a danger of their being won over by the Commune, and Dr. Tombs seems to conclude that Thiers's success was a much finer-run thing than historians have previously thought. Even long after the defeat of the Commune in May 1871, the grim memories it left behind caused France's political leaders to treat the army with the utmost delicacy, combined with reverence.

All this was to have an important bearing on relations between army and nation at various key episodes in the distant future of French history—for instance in the bitter cleavage between the Popular Front and the Right during the late 1930s, which contributed materially to sapping the will to resist Hitler in 1940. Later, in the generals' revolt against de Gaulle in 1961, during the latter stages of the Algerian War, one may also detect traces of the wounds left behind by the civil war of 1871. To the Left, the *mur de fédérés* at Père Lachaise remains a touchstone of faith, and a symbol of proletarian unity; while in the Soviet Union the Commune is hallowed for the assistance that the lessons of this abortive revolution provided Lenin, so that he could succeed in October 1917. Together with France's defeat by Prussia, which was to unbalance the whole European structure and lead eventually to two world wars, the life and death of the Paris Commune constitute one of the most significant episodes of modern history. Dr. Tombs is to be congratulated for illuminating so effectively a vital aspect of it. Democratic governments today may also find much relevance in the question his book poses indirectly: how much can the state expect of its soldiers?

ALISTAIR HORNE

Alistair Horne, the author of *Napoleon: Master of Europe* (Morrow), among other books, is currently working on the official biography of Harold Macmillan.

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"GRIEF, SHEER GRIEF, GRIEF, GRIEF"

A Moving Target by William Golding

(Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 202 pp., $12.95)

I may as well begin with a flat proposition: I think William Golding is the most interesting English novelist now writing. I'm not sure how that proposition will strike the readers of THE NEW REPUBLIC, but I'd be rather surprised if it were widely accepted; my impression is that Golding tends to be overlooked when the Novelists' League Standings are made up, as though he was known to be good, but at some other game. The rank-ordering of artists is, of course, unimportant—it's only a book reviewer's parlor game; but it is important to ask why a novelist of such extraordinary originality and power has somehow reached old age without having become an acknowledged classic. (He describes himself, wryly, as the "author of a set book"—the one novel, as all university teachers know, that every freshman can be assumed to have read.)

Part of the reason for Golding's situation surely lies in the odd shape of his career. He was well past forty when *Lord of the Flies* appeared in 1954; he had been through a war, and through that other and more trying kind of war, the teaching of small boys, and he knew what his subject was: it was the reality of evil; and what his form was: it was the moral parable. In the next five years he wrote three more strikingly original novels, and in the 1960s two more. Then he was silent until three years ago, when he reappeared as a novelist, nearly seventy now, white-bearded and weather-beaten, looking and writing like the prophet Jeremiah.

An odd career, certainly—alternately silent and starting over; and an odd set of novels—each quite different from the others and from the fashions of their time. Not willfully different: Golding has never been an "experimental novelist" in the pejorative sense (perhaps there is no other sense). His interest has always been in finding possible forms for his moral vision, and not in the forms themselves. The forms have changed from novel to novel because the vision demanded new paradigms, but the vision has remained constant: man is fallen, evil is actual, suffering is certain, redemption is necessary but unlikely. It is a bleak reality that Golding goes on reimagining, but not an empty one; and better a bleak world containing good and evil than a cheerful one containing neither.

An art of moral parables is emphatically unmodern, and so are other aspects of Golding's life and career: his reclusiveness, his indifference to contemporary public issues, his distaste for his own fame, and his unwillingness to perform as a literary journalist/celebrity, or as anything else except what he knows himself to be. The latter point shows clearly in this modest collection of Golding's recent nonfictional writings. These few essays, book reviews, and lectures are apparently the whole of his occasional work from the past twenty years. Many were pieces reluctantly taken on, as Golding rather ungraciously tells us in his preface: lectures given to earn American dollars so that he could quit teaching, or as a civic duty (English novelist lectures in France, trade follows the flag); reviews written of books of no particular interest to Golding; travel pieces written because a travel magazine had asked for them. Only a few of the writings collected here come near to his heart's concerns, and even these seem guarded and self-conscious.

No one is likely to read this collection out of a passionate love of essay-reading; in our time there is no such taste. No, if you take up the book it will be because you think I might be right about Golding—that perhaps he *is* important. And if you do take it up, what will you find that might affect your understanding of the writer? Two things, I think. First, the "author." I put the term in quotation marks because writing is always role-playing, and Golding in his occasional pieces assumes a distinct and rather odd role. He is The English Man of Letters, a bookish, old-fashioned man, comfortably familiar with the classics (he scolds Robert Fitzgerald for mistranslating *"O moi ego"* in *The Odyssey*), knowledgeable about Pepys and Dr. Johnson and Jane Aus-

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ten, the sort of writer who quotes from examples that we all should recognize, but who never identifies the hard ones. His prose style is straightforward and fluent, though it gets a bit sludgy when he dwells on something he loves (as when, for example, he praises his own county of Wiltshire), and clogs up altogether when he attempts abstract thought (the same is true of the novels). He is comfortable in his study with his books, but ill at ease at the lectern, where he is likely to lose control of his argument, and slither to the end of a talk in a tangle of disclaimers and apologies: "I find I have entered an area to which my powers of description are inadequate," "I have given much bumbling thought to the question," etc. He is safest when most solemn; when he attempts a joke, as he does now and again, the effect is disastrous, like a bishop trying to put an audience of Rotarians at their ease. And the jokes are terrible.

WHAT ONE feels most of all about this Man-of-Letters Golding is that though he may feel at home in Wiltshire, he is not at home in the twentieth century. Or perhaps I should put that slightly differently, and say that he is as much at home in his time as he thinks any man should be: it isn't man's fate to be at home in the world, and anyone who thinks he is doesn't understand the human condition. For those features of modern civilization that most of us would consider definitive—the ideas, the social structures, the institutions—Golding has only a sour disdain. He dismisses Marx, Darwin, and Freud in a single sentence, as "the three most crashing bores of the Western world"; he distrusts the experimental method—it has begotten "that lame giant we call civilization"; he dislikes television, tourists, and Macy's parade. About politics he has only one contribution to make: "With bad people, hating, unco-operative, selfish people, no social system will work. With good people, loving, co-operative, unselfish people, any social system will work." This is the politics of the Change of Heart; it is fundamentally conservative, and it is religious, and Golding is both—half Christian, half curmudgeon.

This is Golding the Essayist, who addresses the reader most extensively in two long essays on Egypt (which amount to about a fifth of the book), and in several other travel pieces and reviews. A somewhat different Golding speaks in the lectures when the novelist, speaking self-consciously *as* a novelist, tries to explain what he does, and how it works—not because he wants to, but because that's what his audiences expect of him. At first he seems a disappointing figure, this novelist—conservative and commonsensical, rather like the Forster of *Aspects of the Novel*, telling us that the novelist must be interesting, that he must create characters and make them move and change, that storytelling is natural to man. There is not much revelation in any of this. But here and there a more personal and more revealing voice breaks through, at the places where Golding speaks of himself not in terms of his craft, but in the more fundamental terms of his beliefs.

The last piece in the book, a lecture delivered in 1980 titled "Creativity and Belief," is the most interesting example of this. Here Golding offers a curious image of modern civilization as like a Macy's parade—a procession of human beings dwarfed by the vast plastic figures that float above them. The balloon figures are our modern totems—Marx, Darwin, and Freud again—and rather than march in their shadows, Golding chooses to leave the procession, and look for his own belief. The belief he has found is straightforward enough: he believes, he says, in God. But he also believes that the ground of believing is mysterious and irrational, and always will be—that we must base our knowledge of ourselves and our world on a ground of unknowing. This is not a surprising statement for a Christian to make; but it is surprising coming from a major modern novelist. And it does point to a quality of his novels that makes them unique among modern works: they are about belief, and not about the loss or the lack of it. This doesn't make them optimistic. Quite the contrary: Golding defines the theme of *Lord of the Flies* as "grief, sheer grief, grief, grief," and the other novels share that theme. But, as a character in one of Faulkner's novels says, "Between grief and nothing, I will take grief." And so will Golding.

For a man like Golding, without any particular philosophic or speculative gifts, without even much evident knowledge of the systems that he is rejecting, to set himself imaginatively against the current of his century is an extraordinary gesture: an act of hubris, perhaps, but also of courage. And an act that was necessary, to create the conditions of his art. If that art is unimportant, then these writings, mostly minor as they are, are a waste of anybody's time; but if it is important, then the essays and lectures are important, too, and valuable for even the scattered insights that they give to the odd, grieving, parable-making mind behind the art.

SAMUEL HYNES

Samuel Hynes is the author of *The Auden Generation* (Viking).

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FROM HOPE TO DECEMBER

Solidarity: Poland in the Season of its Passion
by Lawrence Weschler

(A Fireside Book/Simon and Schuster, 221 pp., $8.95 paper)

This artful and intellectually sophisticated record of an American journalist's impressions of Poland during its brutally arrested experiment in freedom first appeared in *The New Yorker* last November, a month before the imposition of martial law; it is now published along with pages of rare and revealing photographs and several lengthy appendices, including a 70-page annotated chronology of Polish history since 1939 (which is marred by a major gaffe: it has the Nazi invasion of Russia commencing in June 1940, instead of in June 1941). The art of the book lies in its subtle use of imagery to render critical moments in the Polish travail in striking visual terms. This technique owes much to film, and indeed an awareness of the part such films as Andrzej Wajda's *Man of Iron* have played in spreading the feeling of Solidarity throughout Poland and in the West is central to the book.

Weschler begins with several passages on the difficulty of entering a country for which "purgatorial bureaucratics" are a form of indoor sport, and thereafter he returns repeatedly to images of openings and doors. Thus, on his first visit in May 1981, he meets an aged survivor of a prewar ghetto who sums up the Polish-Jewish question ("The dark side of Poland's overwhelmingly Catholic consensus") this way: "Human life consists of the passage between two doors. For the Jews in Poland today, only one of them is open." A door is the most vivid image in Weschler's review of the "stations on the Polish Via Dolorosa": 1944, when the Home Army was annihilated by the Nazis; 1956, when scores of striking workers were killed in Poznan; 1968, when student demonstrations were put down by thuggist workers, and an anti-Semitic purge was launched within the Communist Party; 1970, when hundreds of striking shipworkers in Gdansk, Gdynia, and Szczecin were massacred; 1976, when disturbances at several large plants led to the formation of committees of workers and intellectuals, from which Solidarity would spring four years later. The image is contained in a photograph Weschler smuggled out of Poland; it shows a crowd bearing, atop a torn-off door, the body of a worker slain in Gdansk in 1970. The third image is Weschler's description of how, during Solidarity's final congress in September 1981, the delegates would burst into rooms without knocking on the doors. It was as if, in the exuberance of their newfound freedom, the political connotations of a closed door offended them. This image is reversed by the final image in this series, which signals the reversal of Poland's sixteen-month season of hope. It is *New York Times* reporter John Darnton's unforgettable description, in a letter smuggled to his paper shortly after the hour of the jackboots, of the sudden jolt of emotion triggered by the coup: "Fear can come back as quickly as a door slamming."

Mr. Weschler sees Poland's postwar history as one long crisis of legitimacy, in which a regime imposed by force of Russian arms sought to win popular acceptance by buying off its disgruntled workers at the expense of its straitened farmers. The result was economic chaos—food shortages, wage and price distortions, a disastrous balance of payments deficits—and the emergence, in August 1980, of a vibrant free trade union, Solidarity. Representing as it ultimately did ten million workers and farmers, Solidarity possessed legitimacy. What it lacked was power. Thus stymied, Solidarity could not possibly implement its own reforms—which came down to worker self-management and hope—during its brief life. Meanwhile, its endless meetings, congresses, and discussions themselves cost the economy dearly in lost productivity.

But efficiency, as several poignant anecdotes related by Weschler remind us, is not everything. Nor, despite its mercenary aspect in America, is politics merely a means to the end of economic felicity. It is an end in itself, one of the arenas of human dignity: the realm in which freedom is expressed and created. Poland lived in this realm during the year-and-one-half of Solidarity; it knew the spiritual ferment of politics. Arrived in Warsaw in May 1981, when hope still ran high, Weschler notes

> the breezy openness of political discussion. Indeed, Poland seems much more political than the United States—at least the Poles are having a political conversation.

To be sure, it was a conversation divorced from real power; and, as Weschler points out in an epilogue written after the coup, the secret police were listening to its every word. But it was a free politics and thus a dire threat to the corrupt ruling oligarchy of Poland, to the vassal regimes of Eastern Europe, and to their masters in Moscow. General Jaruzelski used the collapse of the economy as a rationale for the military coup; and Weschler, visiting Poland for a second time in September, confirms Jaruzelski's picture of economic breakdown. But there can be little doubt that the real motive for the coup was to smash Solidarity and so maintain uncontested the dictatorship—in Poland, Eastern Europe, and the Soviet Union—of the Communist Party.

WESCHLER'S brief analysis of the coup is the weak spot of his book. He doesn't see just how revolutionary a free trade union is in Eastern Europe because he does not understand totalitarianism. Indeed, he never uses the word. Thus he goes far towards exculpating the Soviets for their suspected part in the coup on geopolitical grounds:

> Is the Russian reluctance to see a fiercely romantic, potentially violent, and decidedly anti-Russian movement developing at its very border that hard to comprehend? Would the U.S. allow a similar manifestation in Mexico? It doesn't even allow one in El Salvador.

Notice how the issues have been posed here: it's Poland versus Russia, not Solidarity versus the political hegemony of the Communist Party. "Geography," a Polish friend laments to Weschler, "geography dooms us." Certainly; and for Poland doom has come from the West as well as the East. But Poland today, with its thousands of political prisoners and its violent suppression of dissent, is not a victim of its proximity to Russia, but of the flagrantly illegitimate character of the Soviet regime. Yet Weschler eschews this obvious line of political analysis for the sanitized perspectives of

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geopolitics; it is as if he's too afraid of sounding like a cold warrior. Such are the inhibitions of enlightenment.

Weschler's comparison of Poland to El Salvador is typical: he seeks constantly to relativize into oblivion the differences between East and West. They have their Poznan; we have our Watts. They Hungary; we Vietnam. What's wrong with this? Two things. It cuts the ground out from under a moral critique of totalitarianism; and, intellectually, it blurs the irreducible difference between the open societies of the West and the closed societies of Eastern Europe, where, in Nicola Chiaromonte's words, "to ask for freedom is to ask for everything." Granted, the rhetoric of freedom has been soiled by mendacious politicians, military intellectuals, and that species of neoconservative whose totalizing habit of mind is that of an inverted commissar. Granted, American society is full of inequalities, injustices, and indignities for those without the money buffer. Still, the book does not make a major mental effort to separate the democratic values of the West from its capitalist practices, and to apply them to a stringent criticism of life in the East as well as the West. But some misbegotten notion of sophistication prevents Weschler from doing this, and so from taking the full measure of what Solidarity was—is—up against. Raised in freedom, this talented young journalist takes it for granted. With this book he manages the difficult feat of writing feelingly about Solidarity, while somehow missing its whole point.

JACK BEATTY

CORRESPONDENCE, *from page 5*

Since 1979 I have been studying in this country, and believe me, during that time, I have not read one article in any newspaper or magazine which explained the situation as clearly as you did. I have, however, read many biased reports which also did not express the suffering experienced by the Lebanese people since 1975.

I hope that Jonathan Randal and Edward Cody of *The Washington Post* read Martin Peretz's article. I would like to see their faces when they do so.

Again congratulations and thank you for your beautiful work, on my behalf and in behalf of the association which I am privileged to represent in this great nation.

PIERRE M. KARAM
President, Lebanese Students Association
Washington, D.C.

To the editors:
TNR's long article challenging the media (press, radio, television) was most timely. As an old newsman (*The Minneapolis Journal*, 1937-1939) I know how easily the journalist can join the school of sharks chasing the bloodiest victim. I didn't like what I was reading and seeing and kept wondering what really was going on. Your article rectified that.

FREDERICK MANFRED
Luverne, Minnesota

To the editors:
What Israeli forces are doing to west Beirut is not necessary to the security of Israel. Not even the destruction of the PLO forces in Lebanon can be justified as necessary to Israeli security. With the peace treaty with Egypt and the disarray among the other Arab states, Israel is more secure today than at any time in its history. Furthermore, the American people have supplied Israel with several billion dollars in military equipment to make good its commitment to Israel's security but not to finance a war of aggression.

No, security is not what justifies the present war. What is at stake is the Begin-Sharon strategy to effectuate the annexation of the West Bank and close off once and for all any opportunity for West Bank Palestinians to achieve self-determination. Why is there no recognition or discussion of the vital aspect of the present strategy in your report? To have credibility, it would have to go beyond what you have written.

DAVID MCLELLAN
Prince Edward Island, Canada

To the editors:
Over the past year, I have enjoyed reading THE NEW REPUBLIC's thoughtful and timely articles on a wide range of issues. Yet, for some reason, instead of thoughtfulness and objectivity, your magazine's many articles and editorials on events in the Middle East and United States' Mideast foreign policy are laced with a heavy dose of knee-jerk support for Israel and reveal a terribly myopic view of international affairs.

If I want to read blind and inflexible support for the actions of Menachem Begin's government, however misguided or immoral those actions may be, I can always choose to read the press releases of the Israeli Army. But approaching matters with an unquestioning allegiance to any one side is unbecoming of a journal that seeks to enlighten its readers with facts and reason, not rhetoric and disinformation.

MITCHELL R. WOOD
Huntington Woods, Michigan

To the editors:
I cannot tell you how grateful I am for "Lebanon Eyewitness." I found it immensely informative and hope so profoundly that it will be widely read and pondered—above all by your colleagues in the press. What an outrageous job they have done.

JAMES LAWRENCE
Brookline, Massachusetts

To the editors:
All I can say is this: "Lebanon Eyewitness" was brilliant and eloquent. I salute you for it.

ROBERT TUCKER
School of Advanced International Studies
Washington, D.C.

To the editors:
In "Lebanon Eyewitness," Martin Peretz writes as if Israel has been maligned because the American people are finding out about a bit of the destruction that Israel brought to Lebanon (in spite of the Israeli censors). He is an apologist, saying, "Well, it wasn't as bad as it was reported." This implies that because it wasn't that bad, Israel's attack on Lebanon was all right.

It wasn't all right. The attack was, and is, an outrage. One death was too many, much less the hundreds that Israel admits to, or the thousands of deaths that are much more like the truth. Mr. Peretz acts as if the Lebanese and the American public should be grateful the Israeli bullies are such professionals. What effrontery this is! What gall!

GARY WALTON
Washington, D.C.

To the editors:
"Lebanon Eyewitness" was a superb piece of work—in research, analysis, writing, and sheer prophetic zeal!

CARL HERMANN VOSS
The National Conference
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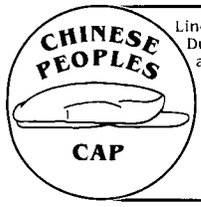

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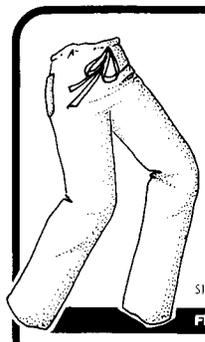

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Voyeurs

SEVERAL HUNDRED Congressional interns are lined up against the wall in the Russell Office Building waiting to flash their blue IDs and confident smiles at the man guarding the door. Various members of Congress each summer donate an hour of their time to informal rap sessions with the interns, and this morning it's Senator Paul Tsongas. The interns chatter about connections and colleges, and plot their strategies for getting seats near the front. When everyone is settled at last, Tsongas makes his entrance. The interns rise and greet him with warm applause. Tsongas beams—it's always nice to work a full house, and interns have bright and eager expressions that would please any speaker. Although ostensibly talking about pressing national issues, Tsongas feeds the crowd a number of well-delivered jokes and routines. "How many of you got to see Shultz's confirmation hearings?" he asks, Carson-like. Then, looking around at the many upraised hands, he demands, deadpan, "Why weren't you working? What do you think this is, a free ride?" The interns laugh, delighted. Toward the end of his one-hour spiel, he reminisces about his own experiences as an intern on the Hill. He tells his rapt audience of the fun he had traipsing about Washington and the awe he felt in the august presence of members of Congress. His voice becomes more intimate as he says that as time went on, he began thinking of his own political prospects. "I remember thinking to myself, 'If they can do it, I can do it,'" he says, and then adds conspiratorially, "You know the feeling, right?" At first there is silence, and then his question is answered with self-conscious laughter, followed by wholehearted applause, the loudest that performance.

THE MAIN PURPOSE of an internship is to be with people who do what you think you want to be doing so you can decide if and how you want to do it. Voyeurism is what internships are all about. Interns are carnivorous creatures, and in the summer Washington is crawling with thousands of interns hell-bent on devouring everything in sight. Interns collect every morsel of information about their employers, focusing on, but not limiting themselves to, the Career Path. This becomes a mental outline, a more mature variation of the perennial composition: What I Want To Be When I Grow Up. Every luncheon conversation, every casual reminiscence gets filed away in the intern's memory for future use. Of course, each internship teaches a different agenda. An intern at THE NEW REPUBLIC learns that there is no one path, that successful careers are not always the result of careful long-range planning. Current TNR luminaries include a former teamster, a Boston psychiatrist, an ex-Naval officer, and assorted political speechwriters.

THERE ARE ABOUT three thousand Congressional interns in Washington this summer, and only 60 percent of them are getting paid. This does not appear to bother the other 40 percent; interns quickly come to see that in Washington political power, not money, knowledge, or experience, is the ranking deity. An internship that consists solely of picking out presents for a Cabinet member to give his wife is worth ten times as many points as an internship doing legislative research for a rookie Senator, which in turn is vastly superior to an internship spent working on "vital projects" at the Library of Congress. Congressional internships are usually at the top of the status scale, but an intern's prestige can fluctuate along with that of his employer: an internship with Representative Paul McCloskey has been drastically devalued since intern season began in June. Private-sector interns are scorned by government interns, and are not considered worthy of any position on the status scale. But business interns view political interns as self-important bores. And business interns have more fun—they go dancing and drinking and play at the beach, leaving status concerns and work-related anxiety to their employers. Washington's private sector has found a way to aid young hopefuls while improving its own image. Successful accountants and lawyers contact their colleges and volunteer for a Mentorship Program, agreeing to hire (support) a student for the summer. My friend Leeds got his $200-a-week business internship this way. He wears a suit each day and reads newspapers and magazines to keep himself busy before and after his three-hour lunch with the account executives. His only job requirement is to look smart and alert when the firm's senior partners proudly introduce him to colleagues and clients as "our young man from Wharton. You know, with the economy the way it is, we feel we have an obligation to the kids at our alma mater. . . ."

TWENTY UNIVERSITY of Pennsylvania students sit around the polished oval table in the Roosevelt Room of the White House. It is a room of some ceremony—the Cabinet meets there when the President is not in attendance. There is a bigger room across the hall, the interns are told, where the Cabinet can meet only if the President does attend the meetings, as if, unchaperoned, the Cabinet might go wild and break something expensive. White House communications director David Gergen enters smiling, and motions us to sit. He greets us, and in a joking voice queries, "I assume this is off the record?" Several interns familiar with my occupation turn to glare at me warningly—helpless, I watch a potential big story crumble. For the next hour, as Gergen casually talks and answers questions, the interns mentally map out how to step into his job within the next twenty years. Encounters like the Gergen-intern hour occur several times each day; most colleges set up programs like these for students interning in Washington. These groups give interns what they desire most: access to the stars. The cabal I belong to, innocuously called Penn in Washington, offers several seminars each week, and thus far has procured Supreme Court Justice Byron White, consumer advocate Ralph Nader, Pennsylvania Representative Tom Foglietta, Secretary of the Navy John Lehman, and many others. With each new Administration, the roster will change—the big-name perishability rate is very high. You don't get any points for seeing Kennedy's Secretary of the Navy, or a Pennsylvania Congressman who hasn't been elected since 1970. They can't get you a job, or tell you amusing anecdotes about what happened to Ron and Nancy that morning. And finally, the name will mean nothing to your friends.

R.D.

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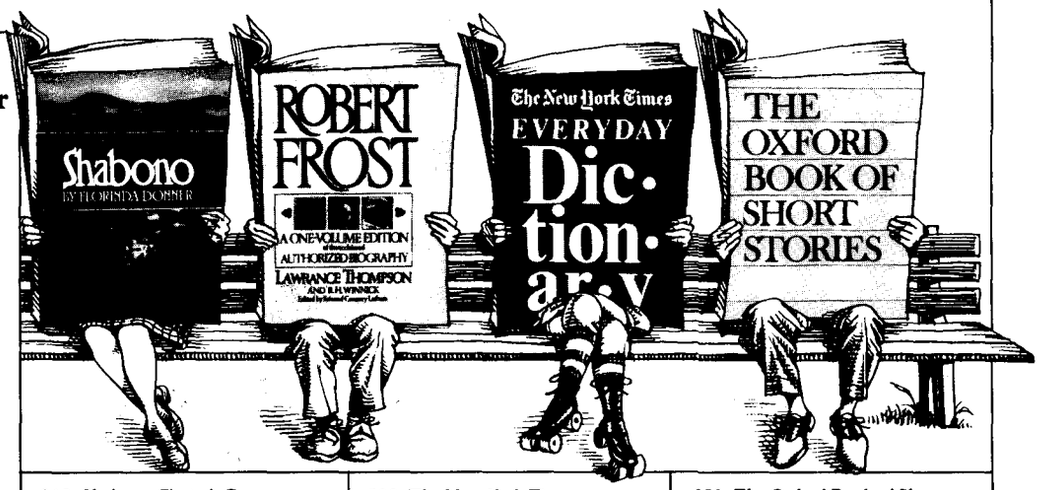

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